

Leadership Styles, Organisational Politics and Employees' Performance: The Perspectives of Leaders and Employees from the Oil and Gas Industry in Oman

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in this thesis:

EM - Employee Performance

ESD - Explanatory Sequential Design

FRLM - Full Range Leadership Model

IRP - In-Role Performance

LMX- Leader-Member Exchange Theory

LPS - Leader Political Skill

MLQ - Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

OCB - Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

OGS - Oil and Gas Sector

OP - Organisational Politics

POP - Perceptions of Organisational Politics

PS - Political Skill

TF - Transformational Leadership

TR - Transactional Leadership

TTLS - Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Employee Performance: employee behaviours that are consistent with role expectations and that contribute to organisational effectiveness. Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller (2012).

Leader's Political Skill: a comprehensive pattern of social competencies, with cognitive affective, and behavioural manifestations, which have both direct effects on outcomes, as well as moderating effects on predictor–outcome relationships. Ferris et al. (2007).

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour: contributions to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supports task performance. Organ (1988).

Organisational Politics: an exercise of influence and power that mainly occurs outside of formal organisational processes and procedures. Kurchner-Hawkins and Miller (2006).

Passive/Avoidant leadership: A process where leaders avoid responsibilities and being passive and inactive; do not make necessary decisions; fail to follow up on issues; delay actions; and do not make use of authority. (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Transactional Leadership: An exchange process between leaders and employees where leaders clarify the employees' responsibilities and demonstrate the expectations that they have, the tasks that must be accomplished, and the benefits of compliance to the self-interests of the employees. (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Transformational Leadership: A process through which leaders effect a radical change in the behaviour of employees, to build respect, confidence, and trust, through their social and action charisma; by inspiring employees to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organisation or unit; by challenging them to be creative problem solvers; and by developing employees' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support, thereby influencing the organisational members' performance toward the achievement of organisational goals. (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

ABSTRACT

This mixed methods research explored the interrelation among leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance in the Oil and Gas Industry in Oman. Previous studies have implied that leadership style was vital in organisations, but scholars appear to have mixed views of leadership operated in Arabic countries. Indeed, the extent to which leadership is intertwined with politics and employees' performance in Islamic organisations also remains debated.

The current research employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design where the quantitative data was collected and analysed first in Study One, followed by qualitative data collection, based on topics framed by the findings from the first study, in Study Two. The quantitative study (Study One) consisted of questionnaires distributed randomly to two groups of participants (managers and employees). The total size of the managers' sample was 184 respondents, while the employees' sample was 209 respondents. The qualitative study (Study Two) consisted of semi-structured interviews with 27 participants representing different ages, genders and career levels. The use of the qualitative interviews assisted in exploring and making more in-depth sense of the quantitative findings.

In Study One, the results revealed that employees perceived that their leaders displayed transformational leadership style more often than either transactional or passive/avoidant leadership. The findings revealed also a negative relationship between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of organisational politics, whereas a positive relationship was found to exist between transactional leadership and the perception of organisational politics. Furthermore, the findings indicated a negative relationship between the perceptions of organisational politics and organisational citizenship behaviour.

In Study Two, participants' perceptions of organisational politics were interpreted according to four levels: reactive, reluctant, strategic, and integrated. The four levels captured how individuals defined, described, and perceived outcomes of organisational politics. Additionally, the study reconciles and refines the dimensionality of political skill as related to existing models in the field.

The proposed classifications of levels, definitions, and behaviours complement and extend existing conceptualisations of both transformational leadership and organisational politics. Additionally, the current research contributes to the understanding of organisational politics that is more balanced than the existing negatively skewed conceptualisations and this will have implications for measurement and management of organisational politics.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Leadership style has been propounded by many authors as a primary factor impacting on the productivity of employees. Previously, while defining the various types of effective leadership styles such as, socially oriented, autocratic or democratic, scholars also attempted to establish an association of these styles with several aspects of organisational outcomes. However, progressively there has been an increased focus on the viewpoints of subordinates in the Western leadership models.

Western styles of leadership, which stress follower participation and involvement, were generally considered inappropriate in Arabic countries due to the fact that their culture tends to be organised hierarchically as a result of the influence of strict Bedouin tribal codes of loyalty (Litz & Scott, 2017). Power flows smoothly when subordinates defer to their superiors' orders and seek their guidance. The superiors, in return, protect and give patronage and affection to their subordinates. Such cultural influences have resulted in the pervasive use of top-down authoritarian leadership styles in organisations in Arabic countries (Metcalf & Mimouni, 2011). Juniors yield to seniors and they are expected to speak to their seniors in a modest and unassuming way, being deferential and avoiding confrontation. Juniors do not strongly oppose their superiors and if the situation is likely to result in confrontation they may choose to withdraw. While these types of behaviour are more expected from junior staff, however, even professionals are often not allowed to voice their concerns and suggestions within the established channels. Hence, the relationships between the superiors and subordinates are based on either fear or admiration. Nevertheless, not all those who are willing to submit to the orders of their leader are given the opportunity to benefit from the paternal relationship. In general, those who are allowed to establish stronger relationships with the boss are chosen according to the boss's whims rather than for their willingness to cooperate, their competence or relevance to the work tasks. On the face of it these practices seem to be accepted by the employees; however, in reality this environment is suffocating for most of

them, particularly the educated groups, and has encouraged immigration of many Arab intellectuals to other countries (Metcalf & Mimouni, 2011). Changing employee attitudes that have resulted from the economic modernisation in recent years, have led researchers to question whether traditional leadership styles in Arabic countries can continue to bring the desired results (Khattab & Wong, 2018). Middle Eastern organisations are becoming increasingly reliant on Western leadership styles to maintain the commitment of a younger generation of employees who are more individualistic and less respectful of seniority than in the past (Murphy 2016). In addition, the growing use of expatriate employees in Middle Eastern organisations has hastened the application of Western styles of management. However, since most of the research has been conducted in Western developed countries, there is a need for research focused on developing Arabic economies in order to test the generalisability of theories and practices derived from a Western cultural context and to identify appropriate alternative strategies for different contexts (Litz & Scott, 2017). Following this line of research, the current research attempts to fill the void by providing data from managers and employees in one of the most important Arabic countries– Oman.

Vigoda-Gadot (2007) has evidenced significant research support for transformational and transactional leadership frameworks despite the emphasis on subordinates' perspectives in several theories. According to Stogdill (1974), transactional leadership can be described as the 'carrot and stick' policy, whereby followers are rewarded for on target achievements while being punished for failing below standard performance. Later, in 1978, James Burns propounded the transformational leadership style which involves transforming leaders in conjunction with their followers to work towards progressing collectively to higher motivation and morality levels (Bass & Bass, 2009). The fundamental process of the leader appealing to the emotions and values of the subordinates underpins both the transformational and transactional leadership styles (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

According to Bass (1970) the applicability of transformational leadership style should span diverse cultural contexts, although its suitability for centralised power in high power distance cultures is contended (Common, 2011; Vigoda, 2000). It has been observed that subordinates in diverse cultures are affected in a similar manner by transformational leadership despite the evidence being based principally

on western studies. Thus, the current research is focused on exploring the applicability of transformational and transactional leadership styles within high-powered distance cultures such as that of Oman.

Furthermore, leadership is best characterised as a social exchange process, and as such, leaders are effective to the extent that they can motivate followers to meet or exceed standards of performance, as well as to inspire followers to engage in extra-role behaviour that contributes to the enhancement of employees' productivity. Zaccaro (2002) suggested that ". . . successful social influence by the leader requires the mastery of a range of skills and the ability to select and apply them to the appropriate situation" (p. 45), and the researcher argues that leader political skill is one of those key skills that is critical to leadership effectiveness. Liu, Wang, and Cao (2011) emphasised the power which can be derived from the application of political skills while Kotter (1985) argued that leadership which effectively inspired and mobilised people to work together to achieve critical goals and objectives required considerable political skills. Other authors, (e.g., Brouer, Chiu, & Wang, 2016; Hartley, 2010) have drawn attention to the function of political skills in networking, coalition building and the creation of social capital. Each of these required significant political skills on the part of the leader. Hartley (2010) saw the importance of political skills in terms of the leader's ability to obtain additional resources for their units, which resulted in those leaders being more highly valued by their teams. The accumulation of friendships, connections, and alliances allows leaders to leverage this social capital to help facilitate change efforts for increased effectiveness. Leaders high in political skill not only know precisely what to do in different social situations at work (e.g., selecting the most situationally appropriate behaviours), but also exactly how to do it in a way which conveys sincerity, credibility, trust and confidence, without any suspicion of having ulterior motives. Politically skilled leaders tend to fit the characteristics of House and Aditya's (1997) profile of effective leadership. These authors highlighted the importance of certain behaviours that contributed to favourable follower interpretation. Thus, those patterns of behaviour were highly influential for effective leadership.

An alternative perspective was presented by Van and Hogg (2004) who regarded organisational politics as an existential challenge which had to be faced by leaders and was difficult to avoid. Thus, it is unsurprising to find calls for the inclusion of

organisational politics in leadership studies, given its pivotal role in effective leadership. Sheard, Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 2011). In fact, Gerald and Darren (2011) have argued that a consideration of organisational politics was a significant indicator of employees' behaviours and attitudes in investigations into leadership styles because organisational politics was seen as deeply linked to leadership.

The term organisational politics has been studied from different perspectives and has received several interpretations as will be explained in the next chapter. However, to the best knowledge of the researcher, all scholars who have written on this subject agree that the organisations cannot be expected to be formally or informally politics-free owing to their social nature wherein individual and collective efforts are invested by the employees for limited resources. Organisations present power-based struggles with the involvement of employees in conflicts and the use of diverse influential tactics to serve their own interests and towards gaining benefits (Drory & Vigoda-Gadot, 2010).

Organisational politics, over the last twenty years, has emerged as a critical study subject for several western countries' professionals and academics, owing to its potential impact on employee outcomes and other consequences (Ferris et al., 2007; Gerald & Darren, 2011). In contrast, the discussion of Arabic countries in organisational politics has been found to be limited; in this region hierarchy governs the entire system and politics underpins each and every hierarchical move (Harbi, Thursfield, & Bright, 2016).

The current research focuses on two facets of organisational politics: (i) leader political skill; (ii) the perceptions of organisational politics. Various scholars (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) have highlighted the impact of these two aspects of organisational politics on the structuring of other political forms of office politics, and behaviour such as back-stabbing and impression management.

In addition, the researchers also focus on the interrelationship across leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance that impacts significantly on the organisational performance (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Sonnentag & Frese, 2002).

Organisations are keen on optimising and advancing employee performance and therefore, it constitutes an imperative dependent variable. The next chapter discusses precisely the multi-dimensional concept of employees' performance. Fundamentally, the two components: (i) in-role performance and (ii) organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) define employee performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Specifically, in-role performance can be defined as the abilities of individuals to perform a set of activities that present direct or indirect contributions to the 'technical core' of the organisation (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). On the other hand, organisational citizenship behaviour entails individuals' efforts, behaviours, and activities that support the achievement of organisational targets in alignment with the psychological, organisational and social environment; it is also referred to as contextual performance by some scholars (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Motowidlo, 2000). Thus, organisational citizenship behaviour contributes predominantly towards the recommendations of developing work environment rather than contributing to the technical core (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002).

Across the world, several researchers have focussed their attention on the association between leadership style and employees' performance. In addition, several researchers have identified various factors impacting this association and these include leaders' political skills and perceptions of organisational politics (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Walumbwa, Lawler, Avolio, Wang, & Shi, 2005). However, the vast majority of the aforementioned studies were conducted in western countries and may not be applicable in many different cultural settings. The unique local conceptual constructs and norms often militate against the application of several leadership theories. For instance, one of the transformational leadership dimensions is intellectual stimulation. A number of practitioners believe that intellectual stimulation contradicts cultural norms such as high-power distance, which are built on the idea that those lower down the hierarchy should defer to those at the top as part of the natural order (Tourish, 2013).

The current research, through the application of a mixed methods approach, attempts to bridge the lacunae in the existing research by placing the study focus on an Arabic country (Oman). The research initially focuses on the two

primary leadership facets namely, transformational and transactional leadership styles (TTLS) in order to conduct an investigation into the association between employees' performance and both styles. Then, the study conducts an assessment of the two primary facets of organisational politics namely, leaders' political skill (LPS) and the perceptions of organisational politics (POP) and their association with employees' performance. Thirdly, the study assesses the association between these two main facets of organisational politics (LPS and POP) and leadership styles (TTLS).

This is followed by the second study focusing on exploring and identifying how employees perceive organisational politics in the oil and gas industry in Oman which is characterised as "high-power distance" and "collectivistic society" according to Hofstede's cultural dimension study (At-Twaijri & Al-Muhaiza, 1996).

Finally, the researcher evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the application of a transformational leadership style in non-western country.

1.2 Background and Knowledge Gap

A host of theories have been propounded to explain the leadership styles that are most effective with the expansive research focusing on leadership styles. The first theory by Carlyle (1840) presents the argument that leaders are born followed up by several scholars (Common, 2011; McCall & Lombardo, 1983) presenting the possibility of measuring leadership potential through the use of psychometric tests. Subsequently, the idea of using teaching aids relating to appropriate behavioural responses towards specific situations were designed to train anyone to be an emergent leader i.e. transformational or transactional leadership styles, or as role models (Bass & Bass, 2009). Despite this, the literature confirms that leadership style is recognised to be one of the most important factors that affect employees' performance in the west (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). Studies such as Ghafoor, Qureshi, Khan, and Hijazi (2011), and Kimura (2012) emphasise the importance of examining the applicability of such styles in different cultures and in various fields.

In Oman, House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004) verified that leadership research studies were limited because of the inherent difficulty of conducting organisational research studies there. According to Common (2011), there is a scarcity of leadership studies in Arab countries in general and in Oman in

particular which limits our understanding of the Western-based interpretations of normative approaches to leadership.

The current research singularly focuses on transactional and transformational leadership styles which emphasise the leadership qualities and the processes that leaders utilise to guide their behaviours and the behaviours of their followers towards the organisational target achievement (Northouse, 2015). These two styles have been focussed on specifically in this current research for several reasons. Firstly, the impact of both leadership styles on the performance of the employee has been expansively detailed in several western studies, although the generalisation of the study outcomes are limited in their applicability to Arabic countries due to the certain important differences between Arabic and the Western cultures (Budhwar et al., 2010).

Secondly, due to the top-down structuring of the Arabic organisation worksites, several scholars have queried the suitability of these two leadership styles in such a context (Common, 2011). Some scholars believe that transformational leadership style cannot fit within Arabic worksites which are primarily based on top-down structures (Common, 2011).

A number of scholars believe that, religion and culture play influential roles in shaping management practices in Arabic countries and they support their views by reference to a number of studies which were carried out in Arabic countries which discovered that, some western models of leadership which stress follower participation and involvement were considered as unsuitable styles (Common, 2011; Harbi et al., 2016). On the other hand, some pioneering researchers believe that this situation has changed and that many Western leadership styles and tactics were now being practiced even in Arabic countries due to globalisation, international trade, and the long presence of Western companies in many Arabic countries (AlKindy, Shah, & Jusoh, 2016; Sheikh, Newman, & Al Azzeh, 2013). Bass (2006) also corroborates this idea and argues for the presence of transformational leadership in every culture, country and in all organisational forms (Bass & Riggio, 2006). He further added that the transformational leadership influence and existence was implicit, although more in-depth research was required in diverse cultures and contexts. Thus, a few researchers (AlKindy et al., 2016; Şahin et al., 2017; Sheikh et al., 2013) have

recommended undertaking further research by conducting an examination and developing an improved insight on the applicability of both styles in Arabic countries. Thirdly, the current research focuses specifically on these two styles, as the available Arabic studies have failed to account for the details of associations between organisational factors such as employee performance, political skills and organisational politics and these two styles (AlKindy et al., 2016). Thus academic understandings of these interrelations in this context have been limited. Moreover, from reviewing Omani leadership studies (further details in the next section), most studies examined leadership and employee performance separately and employed a different leadership model to the Full Range of Leadership model proposed by Bass (2009).

Furthermore, the concept of politics is related to leadership because it involves part of the influence process. Leaders may use political tactics or skill to affect others' beliefs, attitudes, and courses of action.

The current research contributes towards the development of the leadership political theory as suggested by Ammeter, Douglas, Gardner, Hochwarter, and Ferris (2002). This addresses the limited research in the west conducted to assess and explore organisational politics and leadership style interrelation and its subsequent effect on employees' behaviours and attitudes. Also, according to Gerald and Darren (2011), the leadership and organisational politics' intersection based empirical studies and theoretical work is relatively limited or new. More studies corroborate, through in-depth literature reviews, the fact that leadership and organisational politics' intersection is in fact limited and rather new (Mumford, 2011). The positive association of transformational leadership with workplace attitudes and behaviours at both organisational and individual level, including organisational commitment, staff performance, employee turnover, organisational climate, innovation, stress and employee satisfaction have been suggested by several studies (Bushra, Ahmad, & Naveed, 2011; Common, 2011; Ghafoor et al., 2011; Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007; Wu, Neubert, & Yi, 2007).

Alternatively, the existence of other significant factors that impact the TTLS and employee performance relationships, as well as their consideration in the research focusing on the two leadership studies is essential due to their existence with

particular reference to organisational politics and leaders political skill perception that is further discussed in the second chapter (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Hochwarter, Kacmar, Perrewe, & Johnson, 2003; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007; Vigoda, 2000). However, the comprehension of the interrelationship between employees' performance, organisational politics and TTLS's is limited due to the lack of studies focusing on organisational politics in non-western cultures (Gerald & Darren, 2011). Furthermore, Vigoda-Gadot (2007) supported this proposition through his study which compared the organisational politics influence between two countries, with different outcomes.

Vigoda-Gadot (2007) stressed the point that, few studies had explored organisational politics in different cultures and that revealed serious limitations. Thus, the two primary research objectives in the current study focus on evaluating the relationship of these three areas and provide an insight into the relationship details in non-western culture as suggested earlier by several scholars.

Moreover, as regards Arabic countries, the POP and OCB interrelationship has not been explored and correspondingly there is evidence of inconsistency in the western countries (Hsiung, Lin, & Lin, 2012; Miller, Rutherford, & Kolodinsky, 2008; Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1999; Vigoda, 2000). Thus, there may be crucial information loss with a disoriented presentation of the diverse nature of the country with the generalisation of the countries, as each country has its own indigenous way of life, standards, beliefs and rituals. Thus, the current study, aims to reduce the existing lacunae in academic research as regards the POP and OCB relationship with reference to Arabic countries. As stated by Bolino and Turnley (2011), "while our understanding of the political aspects of citizenship behaviour clearly has increased over the past 20 years, additional work in this area still is needed" (p. 181).

Also, in relation to the assessment of interrelationship between organisational politics and leadership styles' and employees' performance, the previous research studies have mainly used quantitative methods to study these interactions across these three factors. Limited research has utilised mixed methods for the assessment and understanding of the relationship details across

organisational politics, TTLS and employees' performance in diverse contexts. Consequently, some scholars have supported the use of mixed methods towards the investigation and explanation of the nature and details of these relationships (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Hsiung et al., 2012).

In summary, despite the emphasis of organisational politics and leadership styles in expansive research studies as fundamental important factors that influence employees' performance, there is still a dearth of focussed research towards the assessment and explanation of the relationship details in diverse contexts (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Liu et al., 2011).

1.3 Research Questions

The current research aims at answering the following four primary questions to develop a better insight into organisational politics, leadership styles, and employees' performance, specifically:

- I. Do employees and managers perceive that transformational leadership is practised in OGS in Oman?
- II. What is the relationship across transformational/transactional leadership styles, perceptions of organisational politics, leader political skill, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour in OGS in Oman?
- III. How do employees perceive organisational politics in the oil and gas context in Oman?
- IV. In the OGS, as regards the transformational leadership application, what are the presenting strengths and weaknesses?

1.4 Research Aim and Objectives

The current research aims at investigating the interrelation across transformational/transactional leadership styles and organisational politics on employees' performance in OGS in Oman.

The following are the research objectives of the current research:

- To evaluate whether transformational leadership style is practiced in the management of OGS employees;
- To investigate the level of organisational politics, namely the perceptions of organisational politics (POP) and leader political skill (LPS);
- To examine the relationships across TTLS, LPS, POP, in-role performance and OCB;
- To achieve an in-depth insight into employees' experience of organisational politics;
- To scrutinise the applicability of transformational relationship and analyse its strengths and weaknesses in managing employees in the OGS, Oman.

1.5 The Importance of the Current Research

According to Ciampa (2005), many studies suggest that leaders can be at a considerable disadvantage due to their lack of adaptability to and comprehension of the political arena. Additionally, the absence of interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates can cause the supervisors' downfall thereby causing low staff productivity and commitment levels (Van Velsor & Leslie, 1995). Moreover, the failure of at least 40% of CEOs during their first year in that position can be attributed to their lack of self-awareness along with their limited understanding of organisational culture and politics as these may cause them difficulty in adapting their attitudes and behaviour in alignment with the interest of the stakeholders (Ciampa, 2005).

The current research attempts to offer a comprehensive understanding of the nature of the relationships amongst the concepts of organisational politics, leadership styles and employees' performance. Moreover, quantitative studies have tended to dominate western studies in this field which explains why several scholars have recommended the utilisation of mixed methods towards the structuring of a complete interrelationship view between the three factors (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Vigoda, 2001). Additionally, the research aims to provide a better academic

understanding of the applicability of western leadership theories in context of Arabic countries, with a demonstration of the prospects and limitations of the applicability of these theories. The lack of research into organisational politics in Arabic countries, as mentioned in the knowledge gap section, is reiterated here, as the majority of existing studies' have focused on western regions and consequently, may have limited applicability within the Arabic region in terms of generalising their findings. Thus, the current research aims at minimising this gap by conducting a detailed assessment of the relationship between employees' performance and TTLS, POP, LPS. Subsequently, it will furnish more details as regards Oman's OGS on the relationship's nature and organisational politics' perceptions. Moreover, due to the diverse contextual inconsistency between the POP and OCB relationship, the current study aims at shedding light on the interrelation between the two factors in the context of an Arabic country and contributes to the academic field.

In relation to organisational applicability and practical considerations, the current research provides a better understanding and valuable information to the decision makers and the OGS managers.

According to the Ministry of Finance (MOF) report (2015), over 75% of Oman's revenue is represented by the OGS, thereby increasing the pressure to assess the possibility of increased gas and oil production to sustain the financial obligations of the country. For example, the General Federation of Trade Union (2014) reports issues such as poor productivity rates, low organisational commitment levels, skill deficiencies, labour strikes, downsizings, technical staff shortages and poor staff performance as posing continuous challenges to the OGS. As a consequence, this has entailed recognition of the need for inspired leadership to critically address these organisational complications and to improve communications with stakeholders (media, shareholders, employees, politicians, and academics) communication at such demanding workplaces.

Additionally, a rapidly evolving world and low oil prices compel the gas and oil companies to increase their efficiency, thereby leading to the question of employee's behaviour and attitude and their resultant effect on the organisations. The current discussion is primarily focused on the leadership style's impact on the employee behaviours and attitudes, within the organisational politics context (Sheikh et al., 2013). Evidently, previous research focusing on this subject and specifically on OGS

is very limited. Therefore, the current study additionally provides an in-depth understanding for HR practitioners and managers alike, towards developing an awareness of the potential of adverse aspects of organisational politics. Subsequently, managers can reconsider the personnel procedures and policies currently in use with a view to reducing their negative effects and achieving improved staff performance.

In addition, the study findings can be employed by the local government officials, policy makers and other professionals, as a reference to detail the necessary future development initiatives in employee attitudes and behaviours and leadership styles.

1.6 The Structure of this Thesis

The current thesis consists of seven chapters as follows:

Chapter One (Introduction to the research) sets the scene for the current study and provides an introduction of the subject with an explanation of the research's importance, the research objectives and its academic contribution.

Chapter Two (Literature review) presents a comprehensive literature review of organisational politics, TTLS and employees' performance knowledge. This chapter provides a vital foundational knowledge of and insights into the latest developments in the field of transformational leadership, organisational politics and employees' performance. The theoretical knowledge drawn from the literature review further structures the study framework and hypotheses.

Chapter Three (Methodology) the methodology of the current research study is illustrated in this chapter. It covers the research philosophy and issues relating to the research design.

It also explains a two-stage research design with respect to the objectives of the current study. The final section of chapter three presents the ethical procedures followed in the current study.

Chapter Four (Findings of Study One) discusses the findings obtained from Study One in which the researcher used a quantitative approach. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are illustrated to achieve the first three objectives of the current research.

Chapter Five (Findings of Study Two) presents the second study's outcomes in which the researcher employed a qualitative approach to attain the last two objectives of the current research.

Chapter Six (General Discussion) combines and discusses the findings of both studies to provide a better understanding of the interrelation across the leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance.

Chapter Seven (Conclusion) summarises the key findings, sheds light on academic contribution and consequent impact on the managerial practices. It also reveals the current study limitations with several recommendations for future studies.

1.7 Chapter Summary

The current chapter has laid the foundations for the current research. It outlines the research background and presents the statement of the research problem. Then, it identifies the research questions, aim and objectives of the current study. This is followed by stating the importance of the current study and the potential benefits for the academic and professional fields. Finally, the chapter ends by outlining the organisation of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

In order to achieve a better insight into the impact of organisational politics and leadership style on the behaviour of employees, several researchers have conducted relevant studies aimed at identifying various antecedents. Several earlier researchers have identified a variety of organisational politics and TTLS frameworks with the use of diverse theoretical perspectives (Anderson & Sun, 2017; Kimura, 2012; Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). In particular, this chapter discusses the literature concerned with leaders' political skill, organisational politics' perceptions, TTLS and the employees' performance. This chapter focuses on providing a concise study background and exploring the diverse concepts or definitions in relation to each topic. Secondly, the chapter provides a detailed assessment of the mode of literature discussion for each topic and relevant current updates. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the interrelationship among leaders' political skill, organisational politics' perception, TTLS and the employees' performance. With the literature review as a basis, the researcher formulated the conceptual framework and hypotheses for the first study. Finally, an overview of the current study context - country and industry - where this research is conducted is provided to give the reader a picture of its characteristics.

2.2 Management and Leadership

Management and leadership share many similarities in several ways. Leadership includes influence, as does management. Leadership involves working with individuals, as also does management. Leadership focuses on the effective target achievement, and so does management. Overall, a number of functions of management are activities which are compatible with the definition of leadership (Lunenburg, 2011).

On the other hand, several scholars hold leadership to be different from management. For instance, Bennis and Nanus (1985) argued that there was a substantial difference between the two constructs. *To manage* means to master routines and complete activities, while *to lead* means to inspire others and to develop visions for change. Later, Kotter (2008) explained the differences between the functions of management and the functions of leadership, drawing attention to their differences. He stressed that the paramount function of management was to maintain order and stability in organisations, whereas the main function of leadership was to create change and development. In addition, Simonet and Tett (2013) conducted a study to explore how management and leadership were conceptualised by requesting forty-three specialists, based on their perceptions, to indicate any overlap or differences between management and leadership with reference to sixty-three diverse competencies. Their study revealed that the participants identified twenty-two competencies which described both management and leadership (e.g., professionalism, customer focus, productivity and goal setting). However, the study also showed that there were a number of unique descriptors for each. More specifically, they realised that management was differentiated by motivating extrinsically, by being rule orientated, by short-term planning and orderliness, and that leadership was differentiated by motivating intrinsically, by strategic planning, by creative thinking and by being able to read people.

While they are different in function or scope, Kotter (2008) emphasised that both management and leadership were vital if an organisation wanted to prosper. For instance, if an organisation had strong management without leadership, the result could be stifling and bureaucratic. Contrariwise, if an organisation had strong leadership without management, the result could be worthless or else could lead to misdirecting change for change's sake. Therefore, organisations need to cultivate both competent management and skilled leadership to be effective.

Finally, in spite of the fact that there are some differences between leadership and management, the two constructs overlap. When managers are involved in influencing a group of individuals to achieve a common goal, they are exercising leadership.

When leaders are involved in planning, organising, staffing and controlling, they are practicing management.

Both constructs entail influencing a group of individuals toward goal accomplishment. In the current research, the researcher considers the roles of managers and leaders similarly; both terms are used interchangeably and do not emphasise the differences between them.

2.3 Transactional and Transformational Leadership Style (TTLS)

The concept of transactional leadership style was first introduced by Max Weber and further developed by James McGregor in 1978 (Thien, 2018). Subsequently, Bernard Bass in 1981 propounded this term of transactional leadership style with several descriptive dimensions. According to Bass, Avolio, Jung, and Berson (2003), the transactional leadership style refers to a supervisory style, with a clear projection of objectives and goals for the employees with the use of rewards or punishments as encouragement for the achievement of these goals. According to Politis (2004), transactional leadership was also described by Jung (2000–2001) as the capability of the leader oriented to the ambitions and needs of the subordinates with a clear development of ways to achieve a satisfaction of these needs to ensure the subordinates' performance. Principally, it is the supervisors who practise this style, which concentrates on the fundamental function of management such as staffing, organising, planning and controlling.

The elements of cost-benefit interaction and exchange relationship underpin the transactional leadership. It entails the working of employees, in accordance with the wishes of their leaders to achieve the expected rewards by complying with the instructions of their leaders (Bass & Bass, 2009). These transactional leaders possess formal authority and their accountability includes management of individual productivity and also enhancing the performance of the team. These leaders exhibit an inclination towards the adherence to the rules, formal structured organisational policies and show a tendency to be sticklers for procedure.

According to Nguni et al. (2006), the transactional leadership style may lead to a productive and efficient environment though may present a confinement as compared to transformational leadership.

The differentiation between transformational and transactional leadership was first propounded by Downton (1978) and then it was explained in detail in Bass's book entitled "Leadership". Bass (1985) detailed a systematic approach to highlight the transformational leadership impact on the workplace along with the distinction between transformational and transactional leadership style.

According to Bass (1985), transformational leaders are charismatic and encouraging in nature and motivate their followers intellectually, thereby stimulating problem-solving abilities and rationality. These leaders ensure that each employee is accorded individual attention as regards their specific growth and development needs. Correspondingly, according to Bass and Riggio (2006), in the transformational leadership style, leaders in conjunction with their followers identify the requisite changes needed towards the establishment of a vision which guides change through inspiration for change implementation concurrently with committed followers. The emotional excitement of transformational leaders underpins this leadership style. Consequently, these leaders do not follow the use of power or authority to involve their followers with the idea being to augment the maturity of the followers and to amplify society's concerns. Such leaders boost standards and engage their employees in an inspirational relationship to disrupt the fundamental exchange expectations and values cycle of the subordinates to thus have the followers move their focus away from safety and security to self-actualisation (Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011). This style ensures the motivation of the employees by winning them over to relatively improved outcomes through exhibiting improved behaviours and attitudes as compared to their initial intentions. Thus, transformational leadership impacts on employees' needs awareness and alteration of their beliefs and values, aligned with the objective of advancing their level of needs in the hierarchy of needs beyond basic needs to reach a self-actualisation level (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

A theoretical overlap has been suggested by various scholars in the leadership field, with reference to the empirical relationships between charismatic

leadership theories (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House & Howell, 1992) and the transformational leadership theory of Bass.

Ferris et al. (2007) presented the debate on transformational and charismatic leadership's association and irrespective of this, the current research utilises the Bass transformational leadership model (1985) which details transformational leadership to include the element of charisma.

Nevertheless, Bass's theory was expanded between 1985 and 1995 to represent three forms of leadership styles – transformational, transactional and passive/avoidant leadership – which is called the Full Range of Leadership Model (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003) which is discussed in the following section.

2.3.1 The Full Range Leadership Model (FRLM)

In order to evaluate the Full Range Leadership Model, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was developed by Bernard Bass (1985). This instrument, which is structured on the basis of House (1976) and Burns (1978), contains seven leadership factors. Despite the initial construct of MLQ with 142 behavioural questions, it faced intense criticism from several scholars as many of its items fail to measure leader behaviours. Therefore, a number of modifications to the model components were made. For instance, Antonakis et al. (2003) suggested utilising idealised influence as a substitute for charisma to measure two parts: attributes and behaviour. Additionally, Avolio, Bass, and Zhu (2004) argued that management-by-exception should be split into two categories: active and passive. A few years later, several studies proposed changing the third leadership type in the Full Range of Leadership Model from “laissez-faire” to “passive/avoidant” because it was more descriptive.

Further, it was suggested that management-by-exception (active) was a better fit with transactional leadership, while management-by-exception (passive) was a better fit with laissez-faire as two subscales under the third type of leadership, currently referred to as passive/avoidant leadership (Avolio, Bass, et al., 2004; Hamstra, Van Yperen, Wisse, & Sassenberg, 2011).

Thus, the existing version of MLQ has been developed following many revisions through various filtrations and validation processes. The transformational leadership level is assessed by the MLQ's first five components, with the transactional leadership characteristics being tested by the next two and the passive avoidance, leadership absence, being evaluated by the last two components.

The five elements of (i) Idealised Influence-attitude; (ii) Idealised Influence-behaviour (iii) Inspirational Motivation; (iv) Intellectual Stimulation; and (v) Individualised Consideration constitute transformational leadership (Bass & Bass, 2009). The first two components of idealised influence are also known as charismatic leadership and the charisma and behaviour attributed by the followers to the leader demonstrates it. The measurement of leader's attributions and behaviours is done separately in MLQ.

Inspirational motivation, the third component, defines the way the leader represents and articulates the desired vision to inspire followers by providing them with the significance of challenge acceptance and commitment (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). In addition to optimism, leaders display high enthusiasm levels. The fourth component of intellectual simulation refers to the least recognised transformational leadership style factor of the leader in challenging and questioning the creative solution generation assumptions and beliefs of the followers. Also, according to Bass and Riggio (2006), this approach encourages the followers for new idea applications without the fear of rejection or criticism due to differences of opinion with the leader. It has been observed that several employees and managers experience an underutilisation of their abilities (Olio, 1999). However, as compared to physical capital, intellectual capabilities can be more significant.

The last component of individualised consideration refers to the leader's quality to coach or mentor the development of the followers' abilities and skills (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In addition, individual employee desires and needs such as autonomy needs, encouragement, and more task structures are taken into consideration by the leader. Such leaders assign specific tasks to their followers and intentionally monitor them to review their specific training or coaching needs (Bass & Bass, 2009).

As regards, transactional leadership there are two components of management-by-exception and contingent reward. The component of contingent reward pertains to those transactional leaders who, with the identification of specific goals, also detail tangible or intangible rewards for goal achievement (Bass & Bass, 2009). Correspondingly, the efficacy of contingent reward as compared to other transformational components has been evidenced to motivate employees to achieve and deliver higher performance levels. The element of management-by-exception (MBE) is the second component which may be either active or passive. The active (MBE) refers to the close individual monitoring by the transactional leaders to ensure minimal or zero deviation from the procedures and rules (Bass & Bass, 2009). However, passive leaders wait until issues arise and then take actions.

Lastly, the absence of leadership, which is defined as avoidant or laissez-faire leadership style. This term pertains to the neglecting of leadership authority and responsibilities that leads to delayed decision-making and also various issues amongst the staff (Bass & Bass, 2009).

In addition to expansive leadership-oriented study focussing on transformational leadership, the significance of transactional leadership has also been discussed in several studies, which suggest the complementary nature of both styles. The initial proposition that transactional and transformational leadership were in opposition to each other (Burns, 1978) has been contested by Bass (1985) who suggests that they are, in fact, supportive of each other. According to Bass, though conceptually independent, both styles entail related leadership dimensions.

Typically, to maintain the status quo, transactional leadership is adequate while for development of employees' potential and skills and to augment productivity, transformational leadership is better oriented. Moreover, in comparison to transactional leadership, a representative's behaviours and attitudes are more influenced by transformational leadership in the context of their jobs and organisation (Bass et al., 2003)

Also, according to these authors, transactional leadership is fundamental to effective leadership; however the further augmentation of transactional style with transformational style can impact on positive work outcomes (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Table 2.1 *The Components of the Full Range of Leadership Model*

Full Range of Leadership Style	Components	Characteristics
Transformational Leadership	Idealized Influence (Attributed)	Leader is perceived as powerful, confident, and concentrating on higher-order ideals and morals. Leader appears as a role model in front of his/her followers. Followers exhibit high level of admiration, respect and seek to emulate him/her.
	Idealized Influence (Behaviour)	Leader's charismatic actions are built on beliefs, values, and a sense of mission. Leader behaves in ways which send signals of confidence and trust.
	Inspirational Motivation	Leader enlivens followers by formulating enthralling vision of the future and behave in ways that inspire and motivate their followers by challenging their ideas and creating meaning to their work. Leader communicate eagerly about the company directions and expresses confidence that goals will be met.
	Intellectual Stimulation	Leader stimulates the creativity and innovation. Leader questions assumptions and challenges the traditional methods of performing task. He/she encourages the imagination of

employees to perform it better and more effective.

Transactional Leadership	Individual Consideration	Leader treats each individual of his/her team as independently rather than as a group. He/she behaves as mentor or coach and focuses on each individual's motives, needs, abilities, and aspirations for better achievement and growth.
	Contingent Reward	Leader recognises subordinates' needs and employs rewards and punishments system for goals accomplishment as motivational forces.
	Management-By-Exception (Active)	Leader oversees employees' performance, foresees any deviations from standards, and implements corrective action.
Passive/Avoidant leadership	Management-By-Exception (Passive)	Leaders oversees employees' performance, but wait until problem occur and brought to his/her attention, and then take action.
	Laissez-Faire	Leader is hands-off and allow employees to make the decisions. He/she also avoids being involved in resolving conflicts, taking responsibility, and taking decisions.

Sources: Antonakis et al. (2003); Avolio, Bass, et al. (2004); Michel, Lyons, and Cho (2011)

2.3.2 Other Transformational Leadership Perspectives

There are scholars, in addition to Bass's (1985) work, who have studied transformational leadership and developed a model for transformational leadership. Bennis and Nanus (1985), and Kouzes and Posner (2002) have contributed in distinctive ways to understanding and developing the transformational leadership style. These scholars employed similar research methods and interviewed many middle- and senior-level leaders. Then, based on the findings, they developed their models of transformational leadership.

2.3.2.1 Bennis and Nanus

Bennis and Nanus (1985) interviewed more than 90 leaders and asked some questions such as "What are your strengths and weaknesses?", "What past events most influenced your leadership approach?", and "What were the critical points in your career?". Bennis and Nanus identified four shared approaches utilised by leaders in transforming organisations.

Firstly, transforming leaders had a clear vision of their organisations. The vision was simple, reasonable, valuable, and energy boosting. The convincing nature of the vision touched the experiences of followers to support the organisation. It is easier for individuals within the organisation to learn how they fit in with the overall direction of the organisation when an organisation had a clear vision. It motivated them because they felt they were an important factor of a worthwhile company. Bennis and Nanus found that, although leaders played a major role in formalising the vision, the emergence of the vision originated from both the followers and the leaders.

Secondly, transforming leaders were social designers for their organisations. They developed shared meanings among people within their organisations and communicated a direction which transformed their organisations' norms and values. Also, these leaders were able to accept a new philosophy for their organisations.

Thirdly, transforming leaders developed trust in their organisations by clarifying their own standards and then standing by them. Trust entails being predictable or reliable, even in ambiguous situations.

Transforming leaders create trust by setting a direction and then consistently following the direction even though the vision may have a high risk. Bennis and

Nanus (1985) found that when leaders created trust in an organisation, it provided the organisation with a sense of integrity similar to a healthy identity.

Fourthly, transforming leaders identified their strengths and weaknesses, and they focused on their strengths rather than dwelling on their weaknesses.

Based on consciousness of their own capacity, transforming leaders were able to focus on their duties and the overarching objectives of their organisations. Finally, Bennis and Nanus also found that positive self-regard in leaders had a mutual influence on followers, developing feelings of confidence and high expectations.

2.3.2.2 Kouzes and Posner

The third model of transformational leadership was developed by Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2002) who interviewed more than 1,300 middle- and senior-level managers in different organisations. Kouzes and Posner asked the participants to characterise their “personal best” experiences as leaders. Based on the findings, Kouzes and Posner constructed a model of leadership which comprised five essential practices: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart.

To model the way, leaders needed to be clear about their own philosophy, values and principles and express them to others. They worked hard to deliver their promises and commitments and to affirm the common values they shared with others. Model leaders also appeared as a personal example for others by their own behaviours.

The second practice was to inspire a shared vision. Transforming leaders developed compelling visions that could guide followers’ behaviours. They could envisage positive outcomes in the future and communicate them to others. Transforming leaders practiced active listening skills in order to show esteem to the dreams of others and to show them how their dreams could be achieved. Additionally, transforming leaders encouraged others to challenge the status quo and to perform better.

Challenge the process was the third fundamental practice which meant challenging the status quo and stepping into the unknown. It entailed being willing to

grow, develop, innovate, and broaden their horizons. They should take risks one step at a time, and learn from their mistakes as they move forward.

Transforming leaders enabled others to act and promoted collaboration. Collaboration and teamwork were highly valued by these leaders. They also encouraged others to make choices and supported the decisions that others made. Transforming leaders developed environments where individuals could feel positive about their work and contribute to the greater community.

Last but not least, transformational leaders encouraged the heart by rewarding others for their achievements. They gave praise to employees for good accomplishments and used authentic celebrations and rituals to show their appreciation and motivation to others. The result of this type of support was greater collective identity and team spirit. In summation, the Kouzes and Posner model focused on the behaviours and recommended what individuals needed to do in order to become transforming and effective leaders. Kouzes and Posner (2002) stressed that the model was not about personality but rather about practices and it was available to everyone. It was not seen as reserved for those with “special” innate abilities.

2.3.3 Leadership Studies in Oman

Examining Omani studies from several different sources indicates a lack of studies that precisely investigate the association between the FRLM and employees' performance. Additionally, although leadership is so deeply linked to organisation politics (Peele, 2005), to the researcher's best knowledge, no study could be found discussing organisational politics in Oman. Therefore, the researcher will simply focus on the available leadership studies in Oman.

Tabook (2001) study was focused on the development of leadership in government institutions. It was one of the few studies that had been carried out in Oman.

The study scrutinised the role of administrative leadership in the development of organisations in civil service sector (public sector). He surveyed 266 supervisors in

administrator positions. The findings revealed that job descriptions, organisational factors (for instance the decision-making process), approaches to technology, monetary resources and procedures and regulations all had an effect on administrative leaders in attaining organisational development.

Another study attempted to investigate principals' and teachers' perceptions of leadership in primary schools in Oman which is also categorised as part of the public sector. According to Al-Mandhri (2003), there were differences in perceptions of leadership between the principals and teachers.

The principals felt that they exhibited several aspects of democratic leadership, while teachers disagreed. During the same year, another study by Al-Harmi (2003) was conducted and focused on the barriers to effective leadership in secondary schools in Oman. The results indicated that many school teachers believed their principals lacked the required skills for leadership positions such as having clear vision and empowering others. They described their principals as rigid and not encouraging them to implement new ideas and approaches in teaching. The results were also supported by interviews conducted with the senior director in the Ministry of Education, in which he highlighted that part of the new development programmes for headteachers focused on developing strategic plans and on leadership skills.

Additionally, a study was conducted by Al-Kalbany (2007) to test the relationship between leadership style (democratic, authoritative, indulgent) and the level of administrative creativity in primary schools in the public sector in Oman. The outcomes demonstrated that there was a positive association between the leadership styles and the level of administrative creativity.

Yet another study was conducted to measure the level of transformational and transactional leadership in the Muscat (the capital of Oman) Municipality which is also identified as part of the public sector (Analoui, Ahmed, & Kakabadse, 2010). The findings showed that managers working in Muscat Municipality were demonstrating transformational leadership styles less than transactional leadership styles and suggested that the executive team needed to develop a learning workplace to foster transformational leadership. Moreover, Mujtaba, Khanfar, and Khanfar (2010) conducted research to inspect the leadership styles of government

personnel in Oman towards task or relationship orientation based on gender and age.

The study revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between age groups or gender in their perceptions of the relationship between leadership style and task orientation. Finally, Al-Asmi (2008) tested the relationship between leadership styles and employees' creativity.

The study included 244 managers and 923 employees working in the Ministry of Civil Services in Oman. The study demonstrated that there was a significant relationship between leadership style and employees' creativity and that a significant relationship evolved through developing appropriate work conditions. Yet, the study found that to some extent the middle managers lacked the qualifications and the essential skills to boost creativity among their subordinates. The study also stressed that few empirical studies had systematically inspected the correlations between leadership styles and other work attitudes and behaviours such as turnover, job performance and absenteeism.

In summation, based on the aforementioned studies, the researchers scrutinised leadership employing different approaches and leadership models other than the Full Range of Leadership model proposed by Bass and others to measure transformational leadership style. Additionally, the aforementioned studies focused on the public sector which is mainly owned and managed by the government and has different characteristics than the private sector which is the focus of the current study. Last but not least, none of the above studies measured the association between the transformational leadership style and organisational politics.

2.3.4 Strengths and Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership

Although transformational leadership is still deemed to be in its early stages of development, it has several strengths but also has attracted considerable criticism. Firstly, transformational leadership has been extensively studied from several diverse angles. For instance, according to Lowe and Gardner (2000), more than 34%

of the published articles in *Leadership Quarterly* from 1990 to 2000 were focused on charismatic or transformational leadership.

Secondly, transformational leadership views leadership as a process which occurs between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2018). The responsibility does not rest solely on the leader but rather emerges from the reciprocity between leaders and followers because the process includes both the leader's and followers' needs. Therefore, followers gain a significant role in the leadership process because their attributions are influential in the developing transformational process.

Thirdly, transformational leadership has its own intuitive appeal. Numerous individuals are fascinated about transformational leadership because it appears sensible to them and consistent with society's prevalent conception of what leadership means. It is attractive that a leader creates a vision for future and how the leader is out in front striving and advocating for change for others.

Fourthly, according to Yukl (1999), there was extensive evidence that transformational leadership was an effective style of leadership. In studies which used MLQ to evaluate leaders, transformational leadership was found positively related to employees' satisfaction and performance. Besides, in studies which employed observations and interviews, transformational leadership was revealed to be effective in diverse situations.

Fifthly, transformational leadership offers a wide view of leadership that expands other leadership models. Several leadership models emphasise mainly how leaders exchange rewards for accomplished objectives - the transactional process. The transformational leadership provides a broader picture of leadership which contains not only the exchange of rewards, but also leaders' attention to the needs and development of followers (Avolio, 1999).

On the other hand, in a critique of transformational leadership, several scholars discussed its weaknesses. For example, the transformational leadership's morality has been questioned by several organisational development consultants on the grounds that potentially, transformational leaders can abuse their power (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004).

Bass (1999) states that the “transformational leader emphasises on what you can do for your country or organisation” stressing upon the organisational contribution by the followers and not vice versa. Also, the impact of a transformational leader on the followers’ exceptional efforts as regards common goal achievement is evident. This corroborates Yukl’s (1999) conclusion that the unidirectional influence that transitions to the follower from the leader. According to Mullins (2007) this unidirectional influence risks to “make the followers more liable to deception”. Employees are stimulated by the transformational leader’s use of strong and attractive emotions disregarding the critical effects on employees that may not yield positive moral values. Specifically, towards the followers displaying trust and respect, transformational leaders can exert strong influence. Nevertheless, some conceited leaders may sustain their leadership role by manipulation and authority and their motivation may translate onto the followers as more of a loss than a gain (Mullins, 2007). This was corroborated by Gregory Stone, Russell and Patterson (2004), who argued that the followers who were heavily dependent on characters might exhibit a practise of exceedingly disastrous promises towards the leaders. However, challenging this claim, Bass argues in the favour of the democratic and participative nature of transformational leaders. Nevertheless, the autocratic and antidemocratic perceptions of transformational leaders is still persistent (Ullah, Jafri, Gondal, & Dost, 2011).

Furthermore, some scholars (Northouse, 2015; Yukl, 1999) consider that transformational leadership lacks conceptual lucidity because it includes such a wide range of characteristics and behaviours - including creating a vision, motivating, being a change agent, building trust, giving nurturance and acting as a social architect. It is challenging to define precisely the parameters of transformational leadership. In addition, the parameters of transformational leadership often overlap with similar models of leadership. For instance, the researcher noticed that charismatic and transformational leadership are often used synonymously in some models of leadership (e.g., Bass, 1985); charisma is only considered as one factor of transformational leadership.

Another study by Tracey and Hinkin (1998) found considerable overlap between each of the Four *I*s (idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration), proposing that the dimensions were not obviously delimited.

In addition, Bass (1997) argued that this leadership style could lead to power misuse as it did not consider the power and influences necessary for dictatorship aversion and counterbalance interests, and its singular focus on designated individuals neglected the concept of the minority being dominated by the majority. Thus, social ends that are not so desirable may be sought by the transformational leaders due to their lack of morality (Ullah et al., 2011). Yukl (1989) highlighted this argument by calling this the “dark side of charisma” and cited the example of honourable and deceptive transformational leaders such as Martin Luther King and Adolf Hitler, respectively. Furthermore, Rafferty and Griffin (2004) have stressed the moral basis required for transformational leadership for it to be honourably transformational. This critical argument has been contradicted by Bass in 2006 through highlighting the distinction of pseudo-transformational leadership and transformational leadership. Most often, transformational leadership is critiqued through the ‘Hitler problem’, which indicates the atrocious abusive use of his emotional appeal, thus being called “pseudo-transformational” by Bass, although he fails to present any mechanisms to address the pseudo-transformational leadership and also to account for pseudo-transformational leaders disguised as transformational leaders. According to Northouse (2012), only at a much later stage is the pseudo-transformational leader’s immoral side made visible.

Alternatively, it is also argued that to improve institutional culture and organisational effectiveness, the ideal facilitator agent is transformational leadership (Barnett, McCormick, & Conners, 2001). However, in stable environments and structured institutions, it was found to be less effective by some studies (Barnett et al., 2001). Evidently, school teachers dilute their learning-and-teaching students’ focus when complying with an inspirational transformational principal’s expectations of involvement in corporate school initiatives.

Northouse (2012) also points out the lack of any precise tool to assess the difference of better outcomes from the new proposed directions by a transformational leader as compared to existing organisational priorities. Moreover, with the leader and the follower being separated by either physical or social distance, this phenomenon poses a major challenge. The heroic leadership bias is overstated by the leader's premonition due to their "blind trust" idealisation (Northouse, 2012). Thus, Lee (2014) argues about the direction of the organisational growth in case of an unethical or deceiving leader's vision.

Last but not least, according to Antonakis (2012), researchers have not confirmed that transformational leaders had precisely the capability to transform individuals and organisations. Evidence was found which indicated that transformational leadership was associated with positive outcomes, such as employees' satisfaction and organisational effectiveness. Yet, studies have not yet evidently supported a causal relation between transformational leaders and changes in followers' or organisations.

In conclusion, despite the criticisms of transformational leadership in promoting organisational success, transformational leadership has proven its value (Northouse, 2012). Lee (2014) corroborates the efficacy of transformational leadership; however transformational leadership is characterised by certain limitations. For that reason, the strengths and weaknesses of transformational leadership are presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 *Strengths and Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership*

Strengths	Weaknesses
Widely studied and Substantial evidence as an effective form of leadership	Lacks conceptual clarity
Focuses on the importance of followers and treats leadership as a process	No causal link between transformational leaders and changes in followers or organisations

Visionary and strong intuitive appeal

Found to be less effective by a number of studies

Expands other leadership models

Can lead to power misuse

Sources: Mullins, 2007; Northouse, 2013.

2.4 Organisational Politics (OP)

Several scholars have demonstrated that organisational politics is of crucial importance, not only for the organisations, but also for the employees' lives (Ferris, Russ, & Fandt, 1989; Mintzberg, 1985; Pfeffer, 1992a). Consequently, according to Ullah et al. (2011), the practitioners of several social sciences domains (political science, management, sociology, and psychology) cooperatively worked with academicians to develop the organisational politics concept. Kurchner-Hawkins and Miller (2006) characterised organisational politics as "an exercise of influence and power that mainly occurs outside of formal organisational processes and procedures." (p.331).

This critical dimension of the functioning of an organisation warrants specific consideration. Correspondingly, a leadership political theory was proposed (Ammeter et al., 2002) towards the advancement of the House and Aditya (1997) study that presents a theoretical definition of the characteristics, behaviours, attitudes or traits of the leaders and contextual factors that effectively influence leadership efficacy in political contexts.

A more comprehensive view of the workplace is ensured with the leaders' ability to understand organisational politics. The organisational members practise intra-organisational influence strategies in various tactics to accomplish self-interests or organisational goals achievement and this forms the basis of organisational politics (Vigoda, 2000). The idea of capturing workplace interests underpins all political forms and is evident in several instances of struggles, conflict, influence and power (Gerald & Darren, 2011). Alternatively, aligned with nepotism, performance appraisal may be used by a political supervisor for a personal friend or to affect other's decision as a self-promotion tactic (Harbi et al., 2016).

Unfortunately, several scholars, for example, (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, & Toth, 1997; Randall et al., 1999) deem the organisational politics to be a dysfunctional basis for the above explanation.

Yet, it is impossible to avoid workplace conflict and thus organisational conflict theories can provide insights for a comprehension and prediction of possible organisational politics consequences (Ammeter et al., 2002). For instance, these conflicts can be resolved with the use of leaders' political skills, and as a result, can provide a high growth maximisation potential towards the achievement of increased organisational environment stability.

Furthermore, Drory and Romm (1990) characterised organisational politics as a social activity which can contribute to the achievement of an organisation's objectives and strategy. Pfeffer (1992b) argued that the decision makers, who had high influence and control over the organisation's resources, were shaping the politics of the organisation. Therefore, the organisation's structures and rules reflected the political settlements which were associated with power building (March, Schulz, & Zhou, 2000). Based on this perspective, a number of scholars (e.g., James, 2010; Godwin, 2013) associated politics with a discretionary or deliberate behaviour.

According to Ferris, Russ, and Fandt (1989), organisational politics essentially entails strategically planned behaviours that are oriented towards augmenting self-interests and that previous research is predominantly based on this surmise. However, OP is perceived negatively and associated with irrational, unfair and immoral behaviour by individuals (Vigoda, 2000).

Correspondingly, Allen, Madison, Porter, Renwick, and Mayes (1979) previously proposed eight different categories for classifying political behaviours (1) impression management, (2) ingratiation, (3) blaming or attacking others, (4) support building for ideas, (5) use of information, (6) creating obligations, (7) associating with the influential and (8) power coalitions. The concurrent interaction of proactive and reactive behaviours with organisational politics with reference to situation and context is presented with this categorisation.

Typically, organisations that lack or have minimal rules and regulations exhibit the phenomenon of political behaviour and this was emphasised by Drory and Romm

(1990). Such political behaviour can result from politically influenced uncertain decisions. Limited organisational resources such as job transfers, pay rises and office space lead to rivalry among employees with politics-oriented groups (Kacmar & Carlson, 1997).

The existing organisational politics in western studies predominantly considers it as an independent variable which predicts personal and organisational outcomes such as job stress, staff performance and employees' commitment (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Hochwarter, Kacmar, Perrewe, & Johnson, 2003; Randall et al., 1999; Vigoda, 2000). To assess the factors that are primarily responsible to augment amongst the employees' political behaviours, several studies have explored for example, unspecified rewards policies, general procedures, vague roles and personality types. These studies have predominantly associated the concepts of conflict, inequity, influential activities, personality attributes, personal struggles, political skills of leaders or employees and inequity with organisational politics resulting from the strong aspirations of the powerful in the organisation.

The dearth of high level jobs triggers organisational politics, as it is common knowledge that the higher an individual ascends the organisational hierarchy further advancement becomes difficult as there are fewer high level opportunities available (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). Thus, employees aim for these few high-level positions, increase their promotion prospects and organisational resource share. Concurrently, employees attempt, with the use of political tactics, certain strategies to augment their network, power and influence to achieve self and divisional interests rather than organisational interests (Ammeter et al., 2002).

It is expected that leaders have an impact on employees' productivity and also lessen friction with their organisational politics insights and relevant political skills (Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000). In addition, the leaders can encourage, amongst employees, effective and healthy conflicts that work towards continual improvements and improved performance with production of new ideas devoid of employees' personal feelings. Correspondingly, leaders with qualities of idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and individualised considerations impact on positive growth in the values, principles, and norms of their followers to attain both organisational and personal goals (House & Howell, 1992; Judge & Bono, 2000). However, leaders lacking in organisational politics understanding and political

skill may find it difficult to succeed in an organisation (Ferris et al., 2007). Thus, alternatively, the influence process underpins organisational politics which constitutes an imperative leaders' domains as it projects them further from exchanging contractual agreements to employee engagement for required performance in the change process (Brouer, Chiu, & Wang, 2016).

Considering the above, three categories of literature on organisational politics can be suggested: (1) actual political behaviour based studies in organisations, evident through unethical modes to attain individual interests, better work assignments or promotion motivated lobbying or non-disclosure of important information (Yilmaz, 2014); (2) Perceptions of organisational politics (POP) based studies; (3) Organisations' leaders and individuals' capabilities-based studies.

POP has garnered the focus of several scholars (Block, 1987; Drory, 1993; Ferris & Kacmar, 1992; Madison, Allen, Porter, Renwick, & Mayes, 1980; Vigoda, 2000) who theorised that organisational politics was negative and demonstrated its association with hostile individuals and organisational outcomes. Thus, various literature based definitions suggest the workplace political behaviours to focus on contrary to the organisation's rules on attaining self-goals (Poon, 2003). Thus, employees' POP can be augmented by the theoretically opposite political behaviours from the organisational policies and regulations.

Consequently, as suggested by Andrews, Witt & Kacmar (2003) as the employees' behaviour is regulated by their perceptions instead of reality (Bushra et al., 2011), the examination of these perceptions may be very distinct from the reality.

Byrne (2005) propounds adverse work outcomes including greater stress levels, low job satisfaction levels, poor job performance, depressed moods and low organisational commitment as the results of the damaging impact on the organisation and individuals of negative POP. However, some employees avoid engaging in organisational politics as they do not perceive it as a contributory factor to low job satisfaction levels, low organisational commitment, high attrition and increased absenteeism. However, these studies, as discussed above, were focused on western culture and their applicability in Arab countries is uncertain.

The current research focuses mainly on the POP and the leader's political skills, which are considered two of the main organisational politics dimensions (Gerald & Darren, 2011). These dimensions will not only provide an improved insight into the organisational politics design in Arab countries, but will also pave the way to further studies on the political behaviours discussion in Arab countries' workplaces. Also, scholars reported that the link between POP and political skill is beneficial to employ and develop social networks to affect the work environment (McIntyre, 2005). Thus, borrowing from the current politics literature which regards organisations as basically political arenas (e.g. Pfeffer, 1992; Greene, 2010), the researcher argues that leaders may be expected to apply more strategic tactics to accomplish their goals and to secure their survival within political organisational context.

2.4.1 Perceptions of Organisational Politics (POP)

The recognition and interpretation process of sensory information for its translation and structuring into something meaningful (Robbins & Judge, 2008) refers to the concept of perception, which can either be positive or negative. According to Ferris and his colleagues (1989), POP is defined as "the individual's personal judgement process, wherein the self-serving interest of specific individuals marks the organisational environment at the expense of organisational or other individuals' interests" (p.94).

According to their definition, two vital features can be inferred. First, the perceptual POP variable presents the assessment by an individual of his/her experience of the workplace actions. The reality, albeit, may not be affected by these individual, biased and subjective perceptions which are at variance with objective reality. However, unfortunately an individual's reactions (attitude, emotional, cognitive and behavioural) are underpinned by these perceptions. Second, the POP oriented behaviour is considered to be related to self-interests that have their effect at the expense of the interests of others and may include circumspect exploitation of organisational policies (Coopey & Burgoyne, 2000).

The organisational politics model proposed by Ferris, Russ, and Fandt in 1989 saw the introduction of the above definition as a constituent part of it and subsequently, Ammeter et al. (2002) further revised and developed the model.

Bedi and Schat (2013) have, since then, highlighted the use of these two models, proposed by researchers to structure their antecedent inspections, correlation, and POP consequences in the workplace. They also argue about the influence of individual attributes like positive affectivity, locus of control, Machiavellianism, in addition to worksite conditions like job formalisation, centralisation, and autonomy on the POP level as revealed in expansive research. Furthermore, the negative attitudes and behaviour experiences by employees perceiving workplace organisational politics has been evidenced by several researches and these behaviours include higher job stress levels, counterproductive work behaviour, absenteeism and burnout with lower job satisfaction, organisational commitment, job performance, and job involvement (Jam et al., 2011).

The job demands-resources (JD-R) theory as proposed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) and its perception can offer improved insight into the association between employees' attitudes, behaviours and POP.

The concept of job resources and job demands (critical organisational environment dimensions) affecting the employees' well-being is suggested by the JD-R model. Specifically, according to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), job demands are the social, physical or organisational perspectives of the work context that need sustained physical and/or psychological effort and are, consequently, associated with physiological and/or psychological costs.

Poor environmental conditions, high workload, and individual politics' perception at the workplace are some of the examples. Job demands may transform into job stressors despite them not being necessarily negative due to the excessive efforts an employee might have to invest in them to meet those demands if he/she is unable to recover from his/her efforts (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

According to Bakker and Demerouti (2007), job resources refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that are either psychological, physical or social organisational aspects of the job which may be:

- a) work goals achievement functionality;
- b) job demand reduction and related psychological and physiological expenses;
- c) Personal learning, growth, and development stimulation.

This expresses the necessity of resources in not only dealing with job demands but their own individual significance (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). The factors of ambiguity

and uncertainty characterise a politically charged work environment which shows the prevalence of self-serving and favouritism types of behaviours (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992). It is necessary that employees are aware of others' behaviour to safeguard their own status and reputations in the organisation where such norms characterise the work environments. The employee is stressed with the continual vigilance that adversely affects the physical and cognitive resources of the employees, precipitating in psychological, attitudinal and behavioural health consequences.

In addition, Vigoda (2001) noticed another vital observation that various cultures also impacted POP through a comparative study focusing on Israel and Britain. Although, within the two countries, the similarity between the overall organisational politics level of the employees was evident, there was a higher negative perception of organisational politics amongst British employees as compared with Israeli employees. This is evidenced in higher intentions amongst British employees to exit a company with higher negligent actions propensity. Concurrently, lower job satisfaction and organisational commitment levels are evident among British employees (Vigoda, 2001). As the majority of empirical organisational politics studies focused on the United States of America, the apparent cultural differences can be accounted for in future organisational politics studies.

2.4.2 Leader's Political Skill (LPS)

The leader's political skill is a significant recent political leadership evolution that describes the leader's' capability of effective management and follower influence. The significance of "political skill" being introduced into organisations to bring about improved effectiveness was emphasised by Pfeffer in 1981, in the context of turbulent political organisation environments (Yukl, 1971). Subsequently, Mintzberg (1983, 1985) reiterated the term "political skill" by way of characterising institutions as political arenas, with the importance of political skill for success and survival in such politically motivated work places. Political skill refers to the behavioural qualities to manipulate, persuade and influence others (Mintzberg, 1983).

The initial minor description of political skill was accorded by Pfeffer and Mintzberg while Ferris and his colleagues (1999) provided its major empirical and conceptual development structure. Subsequently, in 2005, the political skill inventory was constructed and validated by Ferris *et al.* (2005) who defined political skill as “the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one’s personal and/or organisational objectives” (p. 5).

Later in 2007, they revised the definition to be “a comprehensive pattern of social competencies, with cognitive, affective and behavioural manifestations, which have both direct effects on outcomes, as well as moderating effects on predictor–outcome relationships” (p. 8).

Four political skill measurement dimensions were propounded by them on the basis of the second definition: (i) social astuteness; (ii) interpersonal influence; (iii) networking ability; and (iv) apparent sincerity.

The first dimension, social astuteness, refers to the individual’s comprehension of social interactions and accurate interpretation of others and their behaviours. It pertains to high levels of self-awareness and robust judgement powers and these socially astute individuals deal cleverly with others due to their meticulous observation of others and acute adaptation to social situations (Ferris *et al.*, 2007). According to Pfeffer, these individuals possess “sensitivity to others,” and “Somewhat ironically, it is this capacity to identify with others that is actually critical in obtaining things for oneself” (1992, p. 173). Thus, the supervisors’ assessment of an individual’s performance on the job is strongly related to the social astuteness dimension as the best possible projection of his work owing to his social astuteness. Thus, highly socially astute individuals present a contextual understating of interpersonal interactions in addition to an exact social situation understanding.

The second interpersonal influence dimension refers to the robust influencing capability of politically skilled individuals. These individuals, in order to achieve their individual goals, show a flexibility and behavioural adaptability to diverse situations. The same “flexibility” term has been used by Pfeffer (1992) referring to the ability of the individual to adapt the work environment to attain individual goals.

The third networking ability dimension in politically skilled individuals reflects their robust capability to inculcate diverse connections to ensure self-beneficial positioning and prospects.

This accords politically skilled individuals with beneficial coalitions and alliances due to their strong negotiation skills that is demonstrated by their being adept at conflict resolution management and deal making (Ferris et al., 2007).

Finally, the 'apparent sincerity' dimension of politically skilled individuals refers to their projection of being open, honest, and sincere and with high integrity (Ferris et al., 2007). The apparent sincerity dimension is subject to 'perceived intentions' and 'behaviour demonstrated', the two factors which govern its success. The significance of perceived motives or intentions is apparent with several scholars presenting arguments towards the modification of the behaviours' interpretation and classification.

The perception of actors having no underlying motives, contributes to the success of their attempts (Jones, 1990) as such behaviour is not considered by others to be manipulative or coercive and they appear to others as trusted, sincere and confident.

Despite the popular belief of the interrelation of political skills dimensions, each has a differential structure. With political skill being a social effectiveness paradigm, scholars have also discussed other overlapping social and political concepts with the four dimensions of political skill (Gerald & Darren, 2011). These have been identified as self-monitoring, political savvy and emotional intelligence.

Firstly, according to Snyder (1987), the individual ability towards acclimatisation to the social situation through exercising behavioural control refers to self-monitoring (Snyder, 1987). Thus, as both concepts consider situational reactions and diagnoses, there is an evident overlap of self-monitoring and social astuteness. This is also corroborated by certain empirical relationship studies e.g. (Ferris et al., 2005). However, the distinct nature of political skill with an adequately diverse construct from others has been argued by scholars such as (Munyon, Summers, Thompson, & Ferris, 2015).

The second political savvy term refers to the capability of comprehending power, displaying professional diplomacy and confidence concurrent to an effective focus on differentially positioned people (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994).

There is an intrinsic effect on the workplace related information processing by political savvy individuals. Ferris et al. (2005) revealed a moderate relationship (e.g., $r = .47$) between the dimensions of astuteness and political savvy.

The last term is emotional intelligence which is also related to political skill. Goleman's (1995, 1998) best-selling books function, in the past 20 years, shows that the concept has garnered substantial focus. Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (2000) have defined it as the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought.

According to Cherniss (2010), research has highlighted the following dimensions of emotional intelligence (i) emotion understanding; (ii) emotion perception; and (iii) emotion regulation. These show some overlapping with the political skill dimensions of apparent sincerity and interpersonal effectiveness. Correspondingly, Munyon, Summers, Thompson, and Ferris (2015) in their empirical studies found a moderate relationship between emotional intelligence and political skill. Some scholars such as Ferris, Perrewe', Anthony, & Gilmore (2000) and Ferris, Perrewe', & Douglas (2002) have revealed the impact of several social skills such as emotional intelligence, self-monitoring, practical intelligence, social intelligence and social self-efficacy on political skill; however, this has been contradicted by later research (Ferris et al., 2007) defining the variable construct of political skill with respectable psychometric properties. Alternatively, in the context of adequate discriminant validity (Gerald & Darren, 2011), political skill can be considered to display overlapping similarities with other interpersonal effectiveness concepts.

For the measurement of political skill, three scales have been used in the existing literature. In 1999, Ferris and colleagues established and defined the first one as "political skill". Subsequently, a unidimensional seven-item scale called the "social skill" was developed by Ferris, Witt, and Hochwarter in 2001. Later, the "Political Skill Inventory", with 18 items for the measurement of multi-dimensions i.e. the third scale was developed.

Ferris and his colleagues (2012), despite dimensionality and nomenclature differences, suggested the measurement of the same core social effectiveness dimension by the three scales, which for accuracy and unanimity in future research, should be called “political skill”.

The origin of political skill has encountered several arguments questioning its construct of either being a trait or a skill and, correspondingly, whether it is innate or can be built up as a competency. The developmental as well as dispositional influences have been suggested by several academics as regards political skill (Gerald & Darren, 2011). This capability of political skill can be developed significantly through mentoring, training, socialisation and coaching and in addition to various studies, several scholars corroborate this viewpoint (Ferris et al., 2007; Gerald & Darren, 2011; Liu et al., 2011).

2.4.3 The Negative and Positive Sides of Organisational Politics

The comprehension of OP’s perception and experience at the workplace by employees is one of the research objectives of the current study. Two connotations of OP perspective: (i) self-serving interests contrary to organisational goals or (ii) social influence processes indication aligned with the organisation are evident based on previous literature. Thus, OP can be positive as well as negative (Othman, 2008) as explored in the following subsection. Gerald and Darren (2011) have however, highlighted the predominant negative side discussion of OP as compared to positive side and correspondingly, Landells and Albrecht (2015) stress the significance of an in-depth discussion of both sides in diverse contexts.

2.4.3.1 The Negative Side of Organisational Politics

As regards organisational politics Block (1988) stated, “If I told you, you were a very political person you would either take it as an insult or at best as a mixed blessing” (p.5). This precipitates the typical workplace idea of organisational politics to be a necessary evil, irrational and unfair.

Thus the perception of OP being detrimental to the organisation and other individuals developed the negative definition of organisational politics (Gandz & Murray, 1980). Correspondingly, Drory and Romm (1990), have defined this as the use of manipulation and inappropriate ways to attain targets thus contributing to its perception of unhealthy behaviour. For the same reason, employees negatively perceive highly political worksites to project an idea of inequity, unfairness, and deprivation. This leads to intentional non-disclosure of information by employees if they perceive their organisation to be of a political nature (Vigoda, 2000). Also, the OP may hinder presentation of opinions, facts, and voices that project defensive mechanisms and ensure uncertainty. According to Harris, Harris, and Wheeler (2009), employees in a highly political work environment feel unsafe due to vagueness, uncertainty and self-interest behaviours.

Several scholars (Harris et al., 2009; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007) have highlighted the negative impact of OP on job performance, burnout, stress and high willingness to resign. This OP may cause a mental or physical disconnect of the employee from the workplace (Vigoda, 2000). Thus even though the employee may be physically present at the workplace, his mind could be elsewhere.

The OP concept has been referred to in researches as propounding strategic actions oriented towards promotion of self interest, negative workplace politics impression with the employee continuously projecting the negative organisational politics perception (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

Moreover, cultural factors impact the political behaviour that may restrain learning. Bishop and others (2006) revealed in their research that cultures aligned with significance of independent technical skills and abilities acquisition show relatively reduced inclinations to support knowledge-sharing initiatives. The cultures exhibiting lack of trust tend to discourage knowledge-sharing initiatives amongst both individuals and the group (Cacciattolo, 2015). Correspondingly, the lack of trust amongst employees and company policies was shown by Vigoda and Drory (2006) to reduce their dedication and commitment, their willingness to go beyond expectations and their displaying of withdrawal behaviours.

Thus, within the same organisation various groups or jobs may exhibit totally divergent views as regards valuable or applicable knowledge (Gerald & Darren, 2011).

Owing to differential personality characteristics, some managers present higher political skill as compared to their co-workers. Curtis (2003) propounded the terms “Machiavellianism” and “locus of control” to demonstrate the specific highly political characteristics of individuals. According to Silvester, Wyatt, and Randall (2014), Machiavellianism inclined individuals fail to consider companionship, manipulate others to attain self-interests and rather than being sensitive or rational. These “workplace toxins” or organisational politics often cripples the organisations (Chircop, 2008) and thus they stressed the pertinent need for highly aware leaders with workplace politics management expertise.

2.4.3.2 The Positive Side of Organisational Politics

Alternatively, contrary to the negativity of organisational politics, several scholars argue in favor of the OP's positive influence on individuals and organisations. The OP characters, and its processes have the ability to modify and filter legitimate information like the organisational defensive routines. It is not justified to consider OP only in the light of trust issues, power manipulation and hidden agendas. As corroborated by Vredenburg and Shea-VanFossen (2010), OP also functions frequently to introduce valuable benefits to others rather than only to politically motivated and politically-skilled minority in the organisation.

A study by Landells and Albrecht (2015) with a person-based interactionist approach, reveals that due to positive perceptions of different personalities, OP may not necessarily yield negative results. Similarly, Cacciattolo (2015) argued in favor of the benefit of competitive advantage from OP particularly because of properly politically skilled people. Also, as regards organisational environments operating under high stress levels, the politically skilled managers are found to be better equipped (Ferris et al., 2007).

Thus, a political skill underpinned with an inclination to project actions driven to develop feelings of trust, sincerity and confidence constitutes positive politics which

is evident in managers practising positive influence behaviours and strategies and aversion towards negative behaviours. Drory and Vigoda-Gadot (2010) also corroborated this conceptualisation and argued that the creation of an effective workplace (based on concepts of justice, fairness and equity) with positive political skills development can result in higher productivity.

OP has also been considered by others as an effective mechanism for conflict resolution with the application of their POP to assess and understand their surrounding environment (Ladebo, 2006). Also, Vredenburg and Shea-VanFossen (2010) believe that the politically skilled managers can motivate the success of an individual and organisation and through the seamless adaptation of external environment and the easing of organisational change. Likewise, political behaviours that are ethically well-balanced and account for the organisation's vision and goals, promote teamwork and confidence are seen as positive outcomes.

Similarly, towards greater organisational equality, the benefits of positive political behaviours cannot be ignored (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010). This can be attributed to the fact that positive political behaviour impacts on a compilation of the divergent stakeholders interests in the context of the balancing of competing motivations and organisational members' views. Butcher and Clarke (2006) furthermore add that leaders with an insight of worksite political behaviours show relatively better political behaviours management towards equality promotion. The primary leadership element of OP takes into account the worksite political behaviours' impact on an organisation's efficiency, as based on Kurchner- Hawkins & Miller study (Ferris et al., 2007). Thus, the strategies of networking, association, guidance, and alliance-creation may characterise the political tactics whereby political behaviours signify a beneficial and natural organisational behaviour (Gotsis & Kortezi, 2010). Also, the associations and connections underpinned by elements of trust, conformity and aligned with organisation's goals and vision may be termed as "politically positive" (Butcher & Clarke, 2006).

Likewise, in the organisation where an open form of politics exists, employees can be motivated to develop persistence towards learning initiatives. The organisational practises of innovativeness and agility might be augmented by organisational politics. The practice of spreading learning and knowledge can also

be positively impacted due to the interrelatedness within groups (Engeström, 2001). Thus, workplace learning may be encouraged with a conjunction of conflict and the resolution process of that conflict.

Additionally, some positive outcomes of organisational politics were explained by Mintzberg (1985). He argued in favour of the outcomes of positive changes that are typically resisted with the use of OP to pursue legitimate ends to alter inefficient or irresponsible actions (Mintzberg, 1985). Furthermore, similar to the appointment of a supervisor over a feeble supervisor in the sponsorship game, politics can allow for alternative information and promotion directions. Thus, an insight of leadership potential is highlighted through political games.

Luthans et al. (1985) revealed the frequent use of political strategies to impact significant work progress by successful managers (Luthans, Rosenkrantz, & Hennessey, 1985). Kurchner -Hawkins & Miller support this by stating leadership to be “a political art rather than a strategic science” needing high political skills level and appropriate human management (Landells & Albrecht, 2015).

In conclusion, several scholars agree on the organisational politics’ positive outcomes including successful job or policy implementation accomplishment, personal and organisational objectives achievement, career advancement, recognition and status, enhanced power and position and feelings of achievement. Alternatively, each of the previously mentioned outcomes may mandate political actions, particularly for individuals keen on progressing in the organisation or peer acknowledgement (Gerald & Darren, 2011).

2.5 Employees’ Performance (EP)

Several researches in economics, organisational behaviour, sociology and other disciplines have focused on the discussion of employees’ performance. These researches are important for the current reserach as employees’ performance is one of the main constructs in the current reserach. Employees’ performance is based on a developed measurement system comprising indicators, tools and procedures which have been selected and are appropriate for concrete situations and explicit characteristics of concrete organisations.

Moreover, EP has been the focus of much organisational research theory and practice, as it principally views employees as essential resources for generating more value to the organisation in the form of goods and/or services and/or ideas. The integrative performance management models focus on the need to extend the scope of indicators and measures by which the firm can constantly evaluate and manage the basic aspects of its sustainable success (Fletcher & Williams, 1996).

In the literature, there are many definitions of employee performance, but in general it is defined as employee behaviours that are consistent with role expectations and that contribute to organisational effectiveness (Riketta, 2002).

Generally, EP is linked with developing a shared vision for the organisation, assisting each employee to recognise and comprehend his/her part in contributing to that vision, and in so doing to improve and manage the performance of both individuals and the organisation as a whole (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). EP has evolved from a single Human Resources Management (HRM) practice (performance appraisal) to a diversity of HRM activities through which organisations seek to evaluate employees and develop their abilities and skills and to distribute rewards (Fletcher 2001; Aguinis and Pierce 2008). In the three most recent decades, these systems converged into an integrated and strategic process (Aguinis & Pierce, 2008). Advocates of employee performance assumed that this integrated and strategic approach was essential to reach sustained organisational success and to develop the competences of employees and wider teams. This evolution reflected broader trends in EP and several authors developed models to differentiate between types of EP dimensions.

There are two types of performance most frequently used in the literature: (i) task performance or in-role performance and (ii) contextual performance or extra-role performance or organisational citizenship behaviours (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). According to Van Scotter and Motowidlo (1996), the contextual performance is classified into interpersonal facilitation and job dedication. Each one of them uniquely contributes to overall evaluations of job performance. In contrast, in-role performance includes the technical tasks required for the successful completion of the job. In the literature, the vast majority of academics have examined in-role and OCB as two separate facets of employee performance (Aguinis & Pierce, 2008; Ferris, Adams, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, & Ammeter, 2002).

Taking into account the aforementioned definitions and suggestions regarding employee performance, this thesis examines two of its key dimensions: in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs).

2.5.1 In- Role Performance

In-role performance refers to the efficacy of job performance by the job holders, in contributory activities towards the technical core of the organisation either by technological process performance or ensuring availability of required services or materials (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). In addition, in-role performance consists of job specific behaviours that entail primary responsibility with reference to basic qualifications shaping the capabilities and relevant experience. With reference to the OGS sector in Arabic countries, for mechanical technician in-role performance dimensions, examples would include, conducting testing and maintenance activities, modifying, repairing and replacing systems, plant and equipment. Also, cleaning, scraping, drilling, deck painting, equipment upkeep and chemical mixing assistance for other jobs. When a task plan is executed by the individual or team to which the task is assigned, it pertains to task role and to the specific mechanism adopted by them to accomplish the task. For instance, an essential distinction was propounded by Smith between behaviours, results, and organisational effectiveness, with the last being caused by the first two (Díaz-Vilela et al., 2015).

As mistakenly considered by some practitioners, instead of being one single element, task performance is a multi-dimensional concept. Correspondingly, five factors and eight performance components were proposed by Campbell (1990); these eight include task performance (job & non-job specific task proficiency, oral and written communication ability and supervision and partly administration tasks). Variable sub-factors between different jobs were also added by him for each of these components. Subsequently, specific aspects of task performance were reviewed by several academics. For instance, with increasing organisational stress on customer service improvement (Bowen & Waldman, 1999) customer-oriented behaviour and innovation gradually became significant.

2.6 Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

According to Organ (1988), OCB was introduced to define employee voluntary behaviour that augments organisation effectiveness but yet attracts no formal reward policy recognition.

Organisational citizenship behaviour is defined by Organ (1997) as “contributions to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supports task performance” who considered it conceptually equivalent to contextual performance. The concept has been named differently by various scholars (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000) who have utilised it in the capacity of mediator, criterion variable and predictor, with up to thirty components. Examples of OCBs towards organisation as a whole include assisting to recruit suitable individuals to specific tasks, making suggestions to develop the workplace facilities or performing unpaid overtime. OCBs directed towards work-mates comprise proposing new ways to improve a colleague’s work, providing support to others when needed, giving lifts home or even loading paper into the communal printer. These behaviours are therefore necessary but complicated to cultivate within typical organisational structures.

Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) were the first to propound a two-dimensional conceptual framework inclusive of overall compliance and altruism (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Specifically, altruism refers to assisting behaviour towards others and overall compliance refers to adherence of individuals to general norms, procedures and rules. Subsequently, according to Organ (1988) OCB further evolved from two to five dimensions, to now include civic virtue, altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, and sportsmanship. Subsequently, an OCB measure was designed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990) utilising Organ’s five dimensions to develop subscales for each dimension. Contrarily, much attention has been garnered by OCB paradigm’s five-dimension conceptualisations suitability. For instance, to observe OCB, two different OCB dimensions were suggested by Williams and Anderson (1991): (i) OCB-I (behaviours oriented toward individuals); (ii) OCB-O (behaviours oriented toward the organisation).

Organ's (1988) five-dimensional catalogue underpins the dimensions proposed by Williams and Anderson. Williams and Anderson (1991) specifically proposed the construct of Organ's (1988) five-dimensions to include altruism and courtesy dimensions in OCB-I and conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship dimensions in OCB-O.

The two general citizenship behaviour categories have been employed by several OCB empirical and conceptual studies. The first, OCB-I, organisational citizenship behaviour-individual entails the specific individual directed citizenship behaviours to contribute indirectly to the organisation (Williams & Anderson, 1991). The second, OCB-O, organisational citizenship behaviour-organisation, entails the organisational directed citizenship behaviours that in general benefit the entire organisation. Rather, the probable distinction of OCB-I and OCB-O from in-role or task performance was highlighted by Williams and Anderson (1991).

To summarise, the distinction between in-role performance and OCB construct has been explored in two diverse research streams. In addition, the conceptual similarity of OCB-I and interpersonal facilitation lies in the fact that both are oriented towards individual benefits in the organisation (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Similarly, OCB-O can be compared to job dedication as both are oriented towards organisational benefit.

Organ (1988) comments on the agreement of a large number of academics on the inclusion of five components of organisational citizenship in the contextual performance behaviours; these components are sportsmanship, courtesy, civic virtue, conscientiousness, and altruism. However, OCB concept according to various scholars (Michael Frese, Kring, Soose, & Zempel, 1996; M Frese & Sonnentag, 2000; George & Brief, 1992), includes organisational spontaneity aspects such as co-workers support, organisation protection, personal initiative and pro-active behaviours. Thus a single set of uniform behaviours does not define contextual performance, which has been evidenced to be a multidimensional concept (Jawahar, Meurs, Ferris, & Hochwarter, 2008; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).

The conceptual overlap between organisational spontaneity, pro-social behaviours, contextual performance, extra-role performance and OCB is apparent despite the differential nomenclature, measurements or definitions of OCB. Since its inception, in excess of one hundred empirical research studies have focused on this concept (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002), although, throughout the years there is an evident inconsistency in the classification of OCB (Hoffman, Blair, Meriac, & Woehr, 2007).

Last but not least, although OCB has largely been deemed to be a positive behaviour which adds value to the organisation and individuals, there are a number of potential risks and costs associated with it. A related concept is “compulsory citizenship behaviours,” in which a manager requests and expects employees to perform more than what was written in their formal job requirements (Van Dyne & Ellis, 2004). For employees who exhibit OCB, the lack of reciprocity from the colleague assisted or the lack of reward from the organisation, may harm motivation. Encouraging excellent employees can also lead to a diminution of OCB, especially where it was motivated by the desire for promotion (rather than, for instance, a more amiable work environment). Kim, Van Dyne, Kamdar, and Johnson (2013) found that OCBs tended to decrease after promotion was attained, particularly when the employee believed that there was no or only a low probability of further promotion. OCBs can also consume time from formal job responsibilities to the point that the primary function of the job is compromised by further (but unrewarded) expectations. This suggests that organisations, while encouraging OCBs, also find it necessary to ensure that there is no long-term damage to the employee as the cost of OCB.

2.7 Omani Context

2.7.1 Overview of Oman’s Oil and Gas Sector

Oman is located in south-eastern region of the Arabian Peninsula. Previously, fishing and agriculture were the primary drivers of Oman’s economy. In 1970, though, the Oman ruler, HM Sultan Qaboos introduced significant changes to transform Oman into a modern country. The country resolved to transform from an

isolationist and harshly ruled country towards a society which is economically liberalised in order to align with the global economy (Moideenkutty, Al-Lamki, & Sree Rama Murthy, 2011).

According to Ministry of Finance (MOF) report (2015), similar to other Arabic countries, Oman's economy is heavily dependent on the OGS sector and produces an average of 822,000 barrels of oil per day. Moreover, in excess of 75% revenue of the government and 75% of the GDP of Oman was contributed by the OGS sector in Oman in the year 2014. The Asian markets in Taiwan, China, and Japan and other regions are the major importers of the oil produced in Oman.

As reported by MOF (2015), the Ministry of Oil and Gas governs this sector and accordingly introduces relevant regulations in addition to final approvals on investment and policy.

Omani employees constitute a significant proportion of OGS workforce despite the diversity of workforce. Undoubtedly, the scarcity of highly skilled Omani individuals, especially in the technical fields, was the key challenge which the government faced in developing its oil and gas industry. Consequently, the government has adopted a long-term development plan called the "Oman 2020 Vision". Part of this plan is to increase the number of highly skilled Omanis in several industries in the private sector and plan referred as the "Omanisation plan" (Al-Lamki, 2000).

Indeed, the success of such practices and plans required the introduction of several pieces of legislation and policies related to the investment in and recruitment of the human and financial resources required. One of the main changes was to reorganise the oil and gas sector and categorise it into three divisions.

The OGS consists of three divisions namely upstream, midstream and downstream. Upstream companies deal mainly with the exploration and initial production stages of the oil and gas industry. Midstream companies deal with activities which include the processing, storing and transporting of oil and natural gas liquids. Downstream companies refine, distribute and retail petroleum products.

2.7.2 The Effect of National Culture

In global competitive market, the leaders' awareness of cultural differences in organisational behaviours constitutes one of the key success factors. The Arab countries have witnessed the advent of several multinational organisations owing to the effects of globalisation and international trade. Nevertheless, the applicability of Western based theories to Arabic cultures has been questioned by many researchers (Common, 2011; Harbi et al., 2016; Rabie, Karimi, & Sadigh, 2016). According to Hofstede, due to the diversity in cultural backgrounds of the managers, the generalised applicability of western theories by them is difficult due to their cultural restrictions (Blunt & Jones, 1997). Thus, it is essential to take into account national culture to decide which leadership style is most effective in their cultural context (Blunt & Jones, 1997).

The significant impact of individuals' cultural values on leadership style effectiveness has been inferred by the majority of aforementioned researches. Despite the positive effects of these leadership theories' outcomes, their generalised applicability in non-western cultures is doubtful. This raises the pertinent necessity for assessment of these theories with respect to cross-cultural differences prior to their introduction (Ayman, Al-Hamadi, Davis, & Budhwar, 2007; Lee, 2014).

The most commonly cited study was conducted by Hofstede (1993), who studied values in many countries in the early 1980s and classified each country using four cultural value dimensions. The original theory proposed four dimensions namely, power distance, individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede and his colleagues did not include Oman in their study; however, they studied several Arab Muslim countries such as United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Egypt which share similar characteristics with other Arabic countries including Oman where the current study was conducted.

According to Hofstede's study (1993), Oman can be described as a high-power distance culture. Specifically, the willingly acceptable power differences extent by the individuals from the manager defines the dimension of power distance. The reduced trust level between managers and subordinates underpins the high-

power distance cultures constructed on hierarchical structure with centralisation of decisions.

Contrarily, mutual trust between manager and subordinates underpins the low-power distance cultures, wherein a flat organisational structure promotes involvement of subordinates in the process of decision making (Hofstede, 2001).

Considering Oman to share similar characteristics in culture with other Arab countries, the argument follows as to how transformational leadership style can impact employees' performance owing to the lack of assertive communication of their ideas to supervisors; similar to other high power distance cultures (Common, 2011). Moreover, employees may show discomfort in engaging in decision making process because of hierarchical structure. According to Nowell (2009), the decisions are often made by senior members in the family or organisation who follow a hierarchy system. Moreover, individuals tend to stick instable and lifetime jobs.

Individualism/collectivism is the second dimension that assesses the degree of individualistic or collectivistic features exhibited by a culture.

According to Moideenkutty et al. (2011), individualism is the degree to which group members expect that individuals orient their action for their own benefit rather than for the benefit of the group or collective. The focus of individualistic cultures lies on individual achievements and personal initiatives while group well-being and achievement is the focus of collectivist cultures.

According to Bass, Avolio, and Atwater (1996), collectivistic cultures tend to be uniform, share a collective responsibility for goal achievement, attempt to preserve group harmony, and emphasise joint interdependence in organisations. The group members' support and approval governs the individual success (Kuchinke, 1999). The Arab countries have evidenced a low individualism and high collectivism score, based on Hofstede (2005), thus projecting long-term commitments as regards the tribe, extended family or the family (Al-Hamadi, Budhwar, & Shipton, 2007). In such a collectivistic culture, a leader tends to act in the interest of their group members rather his/her own interests. Thus, according to Gerald and Darren (2011), as the group-interest should supersede self-interest, the POP should be low in such a case. Thus, the study would be in a better position to address the difference of perception

of OP in Arabic countries from a western cultural perspective by conducting optimal participant interviews and assessing perception levels of organisational politics.

An additional critical point is that, since Oman is a collectivist society, followers expect their leaders to be on their guard while they are prepared to follow their leader's vision and demonstrate their loyalty (Bass & Bass, 2009). These characteristics could encourage leaders to display a transformational leadership style effortlessly.

In fact, transformational leadership is more likely to emerge and have a stronger effect in a collectivist culture than in an individualistic culture (Jung & Yammarino, 2001). Hence, Omani leaders could become a source of veneration for their followers and this could raise employees' loyalty, pride, and confidence, because group members tend to be strongly devoted to the organisation and they express great admiration and trust towards their leader (Triandis, 1993).

Masculinity/femininity is another dimension that projects the specific achievement types aligned with local society's appreciation. Masculine cultures clearly differentiate between responsibilities with gender as the basis and focus of gender based ambition, competition, and achievements (Moideenkutty et al., 2011). In contrast, the focus of feminine cultures is to promote sex equalities through job security, co-operation and friendly work environment provision. This dimension has been renamed to the achievement versus nurturing orientation to be more politically correct (Mujtaba et al., 2010).

The last dimension is uncertainty avoidance which describes how cultures differ by the amount of tolerance they have of uncertainty. Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance are shown to be characterised by individuals with a low risk stability and security consciousness while in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, individuals exhibit characteristics of higher risk taking and low levels of regulation (Kuchinke, 1999).

In a high uncertainty avoidance culture like Oman, individuals have high preference toward long-term employment and career stability. Therefore, the government sector is the most attractive sector because it offers both. For instance, a recent study found that, 77% of Omani high school and university graduates prefer working in the

government sector and the main reason stated was “job security” (Scott-Jackson et al., 2014).

Furthermore, since Omani culture is ranked highly in uncertainty avoidance, leaders are more task oriented and inclined towards highly formalised reporting structures (Hofstede, 2001). Omani leaders pay greater attention to policies and procedures compared with leaders in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, who focus more on an attitude of tolerance, of ambiguity and of creativity (Dickson, Castaño, Magomaeva, & Den Hartog, 2012).

Later, Independent research in Hong Kong led Hofstede to add a fifth dimension, long-term orientation, to cover aspects of values not discussed in the original paradigm.

In 2010, Hofstede added a sixth dimension, indulgence versus self-restraint.

In addition to the above studies, there are additional studies which have emphasised the strong influence of national culture in managerial thinking and work practices in Oman. Specifically, one of the study conducted in Oman found that 19% of Omani respondents gave high priority to the influence of the religious aspect of their culture on their work practices whereas 18% of the respondents believed that the work practices were influenced by expatriates (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2006).

Furthermore, in response to the open-ended questions asking, “which aspect do you think will affect the future shape of the working practices?” 32% of Omani respondents believed that, the expatriate workforce and international organisation practices were likely to have a high impact on their work practices. One example of this is that although Arabic is the mother tongue of most of its citizens, and considered the official language of Oman, English is considered the main language in the private sector and proficiency in English is used as a criterion in job application (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2006).

Thus, the national culture pattern and unique labour market nature (Budhwar et al., 2010) of Oman necessitate a review of the association between employees’ performance, organisational politics and transformational leadership styles.

2.7.2.1 Local Culture and Research Model

According to Hofstede's study (1993), Oman can be described as a high-power distance culture. Specifically, the willingly acceptable extent of power differences between individuals and the manager defines the dimension of power distance. In such a culture, individuals may view power as unequally distributed in a hierarchically structured society. This situation may be acceptable to most people as an ordered way of running society. In fact, military forces work very effectively in such a culture type. However, there may also be reduced trust levels between managers and subordinates in organisations with high power distance culture types and highly centralised decision-making processes.

Contrarily, mutual trust between manager and subordinates underpins the low-power distance cultures, wherein a flat organisational structure promotes involvement of subordinates in the process of decision making (Hofstede, 2001). Considering Oman to share similar characteristics in culture with other Arab countries such as Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, which were included in the study by Hofstede (2001), the argument follows as to how transformational leadership style can impact employees' performance owing to the lack of assertive communication of their ideas to supervisors; similar to other high-power distance cultures (Common, 2011). Moreover, employees may show discomfort in engaging in decision making process because of hierarchical structure. According to Nowell (2009), the decisions are often made by senior members in the family or organisation who follow a hierarchy system. A leader's success in an Arab country is not judged merely by financial results, but also by the sense of responsibility and commitment he gives to the group as a whole. Loyalty to the group, or the tribe, and to an ethnic or religious group, continues to play a key role in the region. According to Kaynar (2011), although Westerners tend to view this trait with a degree of cynicism, for most leaders in the region, 'wasta' (the idea of working with people you know and using connections in order to get things done) gives them a feeling of trust in their business dealings. It is the underpinning for the culture of "my word is my bond." Moreover, individuals tend to stick in stable and lifetime jobs.

Additionally, according to Bass and Bass (2009), collectivistic cultures tend to be uniform, share a collective responsibility for goal achievement, attempt to preserve group harmony, and emphasise joint interdependence in organisations. The group members' support and approval govern the individual's success (Kuchinke, 1999). Gerald and Darren (2011) have pointed out that as the group-interest superseded self-interest in collectivist type cultures, perceptions of organisational politics would also be low. The Arab countries have evidenced a low individualism and high collectivism score, based on Hofstede (2005), thus projecting long-term commitments as regards the tribe, extended family or the family (Al-Hamadi *et al.*, 2007). In such a collectivistic culture, leaders tend to act in the interest of their group members rather than in his/her own interests.

Accordingly, this study is in a better position to address the difference of perception of organisational politics in Arabic countries from a Western cultural perspective by conducting optimal participant interviews in order to assess perception levels of organisational politics.

Furthermore, leadership is best characterised as a social influence process, and as such, leaders are effective to the extent to which they can influence followers to meet or exceed standards of performance, as well as to inspire followers to engage in extra-role behaviour that contributes to the enhancement of employees' productivity. Zaccaro (2002) suggested that “. . . successful social influence by the leader requires the mastery of a range of skills and the ability to select and apply them to the appropriate situation” (p. 45), and the researcher argues that leader political skill is one of those key skills that is critical to leadership effectiveness. Liu et al. (2011) suggested that political skill gave leaders power, and Kotter (2010) argued that effectiveness demanded a sophisticated type of leader social/political skill that could inspire and mobilise people to work together to accomplish critical goals and objectives.

By working with and through others, leaders also can become more effective by networking, coalition building, and social capital creation (e.g., Brouer, Chiu, and Wang, 2016; Hartley, 2010), which is facilitated by political skill. Hartley (2010) argued that networked, well-positioned leaders are able to garner more resources for their units, and thus are valued more by their teams.

The accumulation of friendships, connections and alliances allows leaders to leverage this social capital to help facilitate change efforts for increased effectiveness.

Leaders high in political skill not only know precisely what to do in different social situations at work (e.g., selecting the most situationally-appropriate behaviours), but also how to do it with a sincere, engaging manner that disguises any ulterior motives and inspires believability, trust, and confidence. As such, political skill of leaders, appears to be similar in nature to House and Aditya's (1997) characterisation of leader style. They regard it in terms of the manner in which leaders express particular behaviours that contribute to follower interpretation and the subsequent effectiveness of those behaviours. Thus, the authors suggest that leader political skill provides the social astuteness and behavioural flexibility and adaptability necessary to effectively address the needs and aspirations of followers in ways that favourably influence their work reactions and behaviour, and indeed, affect the climate of the work unit.

Consequently, the researcher believes that leader political skill influences followers' trust in the leader, support of the leader, perceptions of leader competence and credibility. This leads to outcomes such as increased job satisfaction and citizenship behaviour on the part of employees and reduced employee turnover or intent to leave. There is some limited empirical data which provides evidence for the validity of these proposed relationships. Other authors such as Gerald and Darren (2011) have argued that leader skill in the facilitation of interaction among team members is becoming critical in organisations. Further, Munyon et al. (2015) found that social/political skill was significantly correlated with interaction facilitation, which is a dimension of contextual job performance that bears strong resemblance to aspects of organisational citizenship behaviour (e.g. Motowidlo & Kell, 2012; Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Organ, 1997).

2.8 Research Model and Hypotheses

Figure 1 presents the research model showcasing the interrelation between leadership style, organisational politics, and employees' performance. Towards improved leadership and social influence methods in organisations' understanding, the need to develop leadership political theory in organisation has been suggested by several scholars (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Sheard, Kakabadse, & Kakabadse, 2011; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

According to Ferris and Rowland (1981), employees' organisation and work perceptions are impacted by the leader's behaviour that subsequently influences the orientation of employees' behaviours and attitudes for the organisation and their job. Thus, the association between employees' attitudes and behaviours and leadership style is affected by the employees' workplace perceptions including POP. Several studies (Common, 2011; Saleem, 2015; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007) focusing on POP use like mediating variables' impact on association between employees' attitudes and behaviours and leadership style.

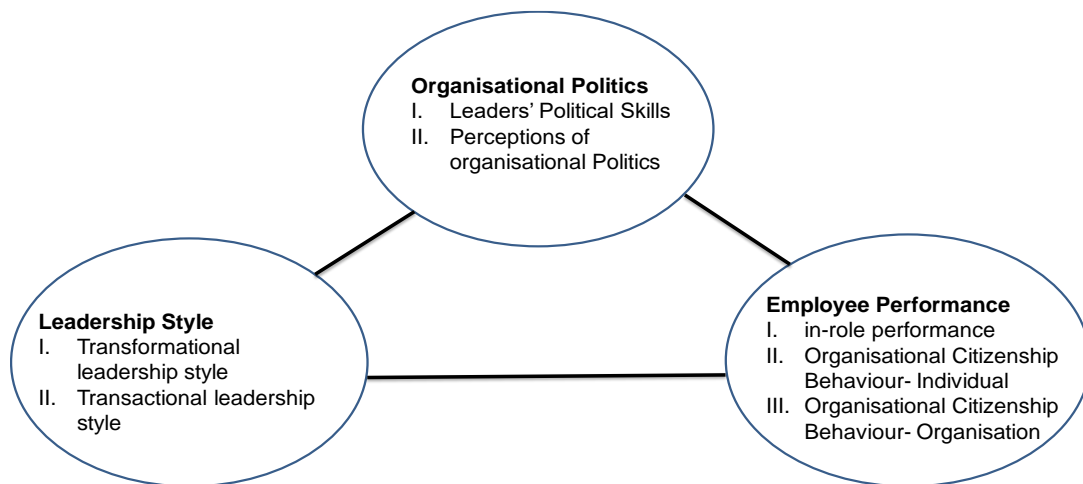


Figure 2.1 Research Model

The rationale underpinning this model stems from the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Graen, 1976), social-exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964).

In circumstances of fairness and equality underpinned by social exchange relationship between employees and leaders and acceptable expectation-fit level, based on the above-mentioned theories, the employees' negative or positive attitudes and behaviours develop. It is the responsibility of the leader to establish a mutual, equal and organisational atmosphere that is aligned with expectations of employees and organisations (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

Irrespective of the employees' expectations from leaders, the leaders may renegotiate, embrace, or refuse these, thereby leading to a relationship construct with equity of exchange, fairness and expectations over time (Bass & Bass, 2009). It is vital to have a balanced leader and subordinate relationship with the development of employees' fair treatment as an organisational strategy.

The improvement in fair social exchange relations may affect an increase in the OCB with a decrease in negative OP effects such as counterproductive work behaviour, cynicism, turnover, and stress (Gerald & Darren, 2011).

2.8.1 Transformational, Transactional Leadership and Employee Performance

There are several theoretical statements proposing that transformational leadership should increase the likelihood of employees' performance. Transformational leaders elicit four main behaviours. First, transformational leaders create and articulate a shared vision and high expectations which are inspiring, motivating, and challenging, through exhibiting the behaviour of inspirational motivation. Second, transformational leaders display the behaviour of idealised influence (attributes and behaviours), serving as a role model by performing in ways which are consistent with the desired vision. Third, transformational leaders encourage their followers to challenge current assumptions and invite followers' ideas and suggestions.

Finally, through the behaviour of individualised consideration, transformational leaders listen to the needs of their followers and treat each follower as a unique individual, as a result promoting feelings of satisfaction and trust of the leader (Wang et al., 2011).

By considering all these behaviours, transformational leaders are expected to motivate followers to perform at higher levels. Although Bass' model of transformational leadership suggests that transformational leaders stimulate followers to accomplish higher levels of performance (Bass, 1985), this relationship may vary across specific performance criteria in different industries and cultures. Transformational leadership has been theoretically and empirically associated with in-role performance (i.e., task performance, focal performance) and organisational citizenship behaviour (i.e., contextual performance, extra role performance) in several Western countries (Ghafoor et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2011; Wu et al., 2007). Therefore, the current study examines transformational leadership as it relates to these two performance criteria in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

In-role performance refers to work behaviours which are stated clearly in a formal job description (Harrison, Newman, & Roth, 2006). Transformational leaders motivate and enable their followers to fulfil their job responsibilities and duties in several ways.

First, a transformational leader connects followers' jobs to a compelling vision of the future of the organisation to exhibit their work as more meaningful and important and hence elevating their intrinsic motivation (Zhu, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2009). Moreover, transformational leaders nourish their followers with a belief that they can attain the objectives which are set for them (Shamir et al., 1993) and these amplified levels of self-efficacy positively affect performance (Bandura, 1986). Last but not least, transformational leaders serve their followers as effective mentors and coaches, providing them with the tools and support that they require to perform their duties effectively. As a result, several studies have found positive relationships between transformational leadership and in-role performance (e.g., MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001; Liao & Chuang, 2007).

In contrast, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB-I & OCB-O) refers to willingly inspired work behaviours which exceed prescribed job description but contribute to the social and psychological contexts of the job. As revealed by a number of studies (Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Sosik, 2005), transformational leaders provoke followers to work for the good of the team by swelling social identification,

thereby motivating followers to engage in altruistic behaviours (e.g., assisting colleagues if they need help) and to dedicate themselves to their jobs and organisations (e.g., promoting organisational public images and working extra time). As followers of transformational leaders adopt the objectives of the collective, they probably view behaviours that aid the social and psychological context of their work as consistent and meaningful to their own self-concept.

In addition, transformational leaders persuade their followers to become involved in OCB by serving as role models who are eager to sacrifice their self-interests for the shared benefits and by strengthening a sense of group cohesion and belongingness (Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005).

Furthermore, transformational leaders motivate and intellectually stimulate followers to change the status quo, take risks, propose creative ideas and engage in different ways of thinking (Kimura, 2012). Transformational leaders empower their followers to explore different scenarios to develop further solutions and new opportunities (Jung, Chow, & Wu, 2003).

Several additional studies support the association between transformational leadership and organisational citizenship. Purvanova, Bono, and Dziewieczynski (2006) showed an average correlation of .18 between the transformational leadership dimensions and the citizenship behaviours of conscientiousness, civic virtue, altruism, sportsmanship, and courtesy. Likewise, Ghafoor et al. (2011) reported an average correlation of .14 between transformational leadership dimensions and the citizenship behaviours of helping, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. Therefore, transformational leadership and OCB are expected to be positively correlated and the following study hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership style is positively correlated with in-role performance (H1a), OCB-I (H1b), and OCB-O (H1c).

The second style in the current study is Transactional leadership style which should also have a positive relationship within-role performance and OCB. Transactional leadership involves reminding employees that their performance is being monitored and that future rewards and punishments are based on their level of performance. Consequently, a direct linkage should exist between transactional leader, in-role performance and both forms of OCB. The Vigoda-Gadot and Drory

(2006) study revealed that a pertinent relationship between the transactional leadership dimension of conditional gratitude measure and in-role performance. However, generally, the empirical evidence supports the relationship between contingent reward behaviour (positive managerial feedback) and in-role performance but is less supportive of the relationship between transactional style and OCB (Politis, 2004).

Primarily, a rewards and penalties system underpins the transactional leadership style and shows limited stimulation to motivate individuals to transverse further than the fundamentals.

Thus, complacency may set in amongst the transactional leader's followers who would tend towards attaining minimal expectations to avoid penalties (Bass & Bass, 2009). Herein, there is an agreement of the follower and the leader regarding the reward for negotiated performance levels of achievement and thus this leadership's success is subject to the leader and followers' satisfaction level in adherence to this performance-based evaluation system.

Consequently, transactional leadership presents a limited positive impact on the expected causal chain of employee performance that results in improved organisational performance (Bass & Bass, 2009; Brahim, Ridić, & Jukić, 2015). Nevertheless, based on the above discussion, the researcher expects the following as stated in the second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Transactional leadership style is positively correlated with in-role performance (H2a), OCB-I (H2b), and OCB-O (H2c).

Following a continuous three decades of transformational leadership research, several studies have extended support to the positive association between employee performance and styles hypotheses (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Additionally, a strong relationship between employees' performance and transformational leadership as compared to transactional leadership has been established in a few studies (Arnold et al., 2007; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

The transformational leader can present a strong ability to motivate employees to extend their commitment to the job beyond usual work hours and in addition to supporting and coaching other employees. In alignment with the leader-member exchange theory (LMX), propounded by Graen (1976) and others, transformational leaders motivate employees to stretch beyond basic job description requirements.

In particular, individuals are encouraged in transformational leadership to initiate activities that positively impact the organisation and other individuals (Engelbrecht & Schlechter, 2006).

In contrast, transactional leadership influences an improvement in the work performance levels effectiveness, with the specific context of in-role performance that presents quantitative assessment and reward (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

Using meta-analysis to investigate the correlation between national culture and LMX theory, it was revealed that organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) had a strong association with LMX in Western and Eastern cultures. A total of 253 studies were used in this meta-analysis across 23 countries to draw a comparison between two different cultural configurations on the impact of LMX on work-related behaviours and attitudes such as OCB, task performance, and other employees' outcomes such as affective commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intentions and normative commitment (Wang et al., 2011). The cultural configuration was between Western countries denoting the horizontal-individualistic and East Asian countries denoting the vertical-collectivist. A stronger relationship between LMX and citizenship behaviours was found in horizontal-individualistic cultures by the analysis in comparison to vertical-collectivist cultures. Also, the lack of any cultural difference in the LMX and task performance relationships was revealed through this analysis (Rockstuhl, Dulebohn, Ang, & Shore, 2012). Therefore, the following study hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Transformational leadership is more positively correlated with in-role performance (H3a), OCB-I (H3b), and OCB-O (H3c). [when compared to Transactional leadership style].

2.8.2 Transformational, Transactional Leadership and Organisational Politics

It is imperative for a manager to effectively manage an organisation to have an understanding of the organisational structure and leadership team (Michela & Burke, 2000). Ammeter et al. (2002) conducted an analysis of empirical studies and theoretical works focused on the intersection between organisational politics and leadership.

For instance, intra-organisational persuasion tactics underpin the construct of organisational politics that is evidenced by the employees to achieve self-interests or gain organisational objectives in several ways.

Typically, it is manifested in diverse forms like struggles, authority, conflicts over power sources, control, influence, and tactics to actualise warring worksites' interests and planned efforts (Vigoda-Gadot, Vinarski-Peretz, & Ben-Zion, 2003).

Mastering OP tactics and knowledge can equip a manager with prospects to gain a better understanding of organisation settings and work structure.

The general dysfunctional perception of OP (Cropanzano et al., 1997; Randall et al., 1999) is typically projected in the Arabic culture through nepotism, for instance, by awarding an outstanding performance appraisal score to a personal friend with the objective of self-promotion or showing favouritism (Harbi et al., 2016).

This indicates the unavoidable nature of worksites politics as supported by several industrial organisational psychologists and thus leadership theories can be helpful to develop an insight and analyse possible organisational politics consequences (Ammeter et al., 2002; Gerald & Darren, 2011). Leaders with this astute political skill are adept at balancing needs of both organisation and its members (Munyon et al., 2015). Thus, they are easily capable of achieving conflict resolution among individuals to create an organisational environment that is effective. It displays excessively high potential to not only augment business growth but also to influence effective decision-making processes (Ferris et al., 2007).

Organisational politics, based on the literature, is perceived in two opposite ways: (i) positive or (ii) negative and the current study takes into account both dimensions. Commonly, OP is perceived to be a necessary evil, irrational and unfair and thus, it precipitates detrimental effects on the organisation and its members, thereby leading to a negative definition of OP (Drory & Romm, 1990; Ferris et al., 1989; Gerald & Darren, 2011). In contrast, other scholars perceive OP to be a robust strategy for the achievement of organisational goals, with a concurrent benefit to the individuals of obtaining their rights (Landells & Albrecht, 2015).

Also, it can be employed in the capacity of influence tactics by the managers with their positive use of it toward their subordinates, instead of negatively using it to exert an influence within the organisation. Additionally, OP offers a legitimate fight

response particularly in distress or crisis times in the organisation (Ferris & Kacmar, 1992).

OP constitutes the primary domain wherein the political skills of a leader can effect a positive change and also be significant for improved performance of individuals as well as organisations (Randall et al., 1999).

Some of the existing OP studies have perceived the concept as an independent variable when employed in the use of work outcome prediction like job stress, employee satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour (Porter, Allen, & Angle, 2003; Randall et al., 1999; Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006). Nevertheless, few researchers have attempted to identify the underlying causes and factors that provide motivation towards political behaviour among individuals (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Ullah et al., 2011). Summarising, these efforts by the researchers to correlate organisational politics with different leadership styles, political skill of leaders, conflicts, performance, influential activities, inequity, unfairness and effective management highlights OP to be promoted by those hungry with ambitions or desires and are in powerful positions in the organisation (Bedi & Schat, 2013).

It can be inferred that political skill and improved OP comprehension accords leaders with an improved capability as regards effective workplace management, reduction of uncertainty, minimisation of friction and dissolution of existing political parties (Munyon et al., 2015).

In addition, these leaders can construct programmed conflicts to promote diverse opinions of the individuals, irrespective of the personal feeling or individuals' interests towards augmented performance, policy implementation and decision making. For instance, it was concluded by one of the studies that, in order to motivate followers, it was imperative that leaders engaged with the core values of the followers and communicated with them through vision and personal actions that often provided significant key dimensions in transformational leadership (Fry, 2003).

In addition, two other studies revealed that, leaders who exhibited some of the transformational leadership components managed OP positively and were able to align the values of their followers and promoted individual as well performance of the organisation (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993).

Thus, it is apparent that interaction of both leadership styles and organisational politics yields diverse results at individual as well as organisational level, thus progressing further than the typical contractual exchange between leaders and their subordinates for desired performance.

The next hypotheses is designed to test the association between the POP and the leadership styles that should be different. According to Bass et al. (2003), a transformational leader not only projects a mission and a vision, but also a strategic plan and this in turn may reduce the uncertainty and ambiguity for a better and fair management of the challenges faced by the organisation. The POP also can be reduced by the belief in the principles of justice by a transformational leader. However, negotiation of skills and exchange relationship underpin the transactional style. In circumstances of limited resources an employee can manipulate the augmentation of self-interests to give them greater priority as compared to others. Transactional leaders who are politically astute lead to the development of immoral performance and a 'crimes of obedience' environment (Beu & Buckley, 2004). Transformational leadership progresses further from self-interests (Bass, 1999), while transactional leadership concentrates on manager and subordinates' exchange relationship. Transformational leaders provide their followers with an environment of inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealised influence and individualised consideration (Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011). Thus, the fourth and fifth study hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 4: Transactional leadership style is positively correlated with perception of organisational politics.

Hypothesis 5: Transformational leadership style is negatively correlated with perception of organisational politics.

Through the inculcation of values and sharing leadership, a strong connection is established by the politically skilled leader with their followers (Ferris et al., 2007). The aspects of transformational leader behaviour including followers empowerment,

motivation, vision articulation and followers' relationship are shared by politically skilled leaders (Yukl, 2012). For example, in alignment with intellectual stimulation, politically skilled leaders motivate the creativity and innovativeness of their followers (Bass & Bass, 2009). Thus, leaders encourage followers to think prior to taking any decision and acting on it. Followers are motivated by transformational leaders to contemplate achieving in excess of expected outcomes, and accordingly, being prepared for unforeseen success consequences. This warrants the style which promotes an environment conducive to creative ideas and various opinions. This can be affected through a combination of interpersonal influence and apparent sincerity in persuasion of followers to suggest creative solutions for existing issues.(Ewen, Wihler, Bickle, Oerder, Ellen, et al., 2013).

Through constructing a supportive environment and offering effective listening to the needs of the followers, transformational leaders demonstrate a high individualised consideration level with appreciation of individual differences (Bass & Bass, 2009). Ferris and others have corroborated this and propounded the terms "social astuteness" and "apparent sincerity" for transformational leaders (Ferris et al., 2007).

Leaders displaying social astuteness and apparent sincerity are able to identify differential followers' needs and interact effectively to construct a trusting work environment.

Transformational leadership essentially needs the parameters of social astuteness and interpersonal influence (Beu & Buckley, 2004).

Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is stated:

Hypothesis 6: Transformational leadership style is more correlated with perception of leader's political skill. [When compared to transactional leadership style].

2.8.3 Organisational Politics and Employees Performance

Several conceptual and empirical papers have demonstrated the study of employee performance from a political perspective in many organisational researches (Ferris et al., 2007; Kapoutsis, Papalexandris, Nikolopoulos, Hochwarter, & Ferris, 2011; Randall et al., 1999). Strong perceptions of organisational politics can be detrimental to the organisation in a variety of ways. (i) a strong perception of organisational politics can escalate the negative attitudes and behaviours (ii) it can decrease the positive attitudes and behaviours (Gerald & Darren, 2011). (iii) it can result in reduction of social cohesion and (iv) can increase favourable interests tendency (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007).

Numerous organisational and work outcomes are significantly associated with POP. According to Pfeffer (1981), under some circumstances work productivity efficiency reduces with political activities in organisations. Some researchers have found that POP is negatively correlated with various employee attitudes and behaviours including anxiety, tension, burnout, commitment, and more (Vigoda, 2000). The negative characteristics of organisational politics have consequently been debated in previous organisational politics studies projecting their influence on both employees and organisational outcomes (Huang, Chuang, & Lin, 2003; Valle & Perrewe, 2000; Valle & Witt, 2001; Vigoda, 2000).

While discussing the impact of organisational politics upon employee performance, Ferris and his colleagues (2005) categorised employees' performance in two parts which are in-role performance and OCB. They identified the existence of a negative relationship between POP and in-role performance. In-role performance was referred to the primary technical responsibilities necessary for successful job execution, while organisational citizenship behaviour involves tasks that are not essentially detailed in a job description.

Some researchers were unable to isolate any relationship or association of a significant nature (Miller et al., 2008; Randall et al., 1999; Vigoda, 2000), while an association between both types of employee performance and organisational politics was revealed by other studies (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Hochwarter, Witt,

Treadway, & Ferris, 2006; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007), thus making the review of existing empirical studies on this relationship questionable.

Finkelstein and Penner (2004) supported the correlation of POP with OCB-I but not with OCB-O. Thus, contrary to previous research by Finkelstein and Penner which argued in favour of empirical support for the execution of OCB, at least in some cases, for politically oriented motives. The relationship between perception of organisational politics and employee performance has projected a range from negative (-.32) to positive (.12)(Miller et al., 2008).

Accordingly, the seventh hypothesis is formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 7: Perception of organisational politics is negatively correlated with in-role performance (H7a), OCB-I (H7b) and OCB-O (H7c).

The second key element belonging to organisational politics is leader political skill. Leader political skill, as characterised by a number of scholars (Ferris et al., 2005) incorporates the ability to use control in social situations, along with the capacity to develop one's social network and social capital. The Ferris et al. (2005) definition includes three fundamental elements which may assist to describe politically skilled leaders. First, politically skilled leaders have the ability to simply realise social cues and precisely attribute the behavioural motivations of others. Second, political skill allows leader to persuade and influence followers' actions with relatively little effort.

Third, politically skilled leaders will more effectively establish the networks and social capital which are essential to both uplifting their status within the organisation and providing scarce resources to their followers. As mentioned by Brouer, Douglas, Treadway, and Ferris (2013) leader political skill forecasts subordinate's perceived organisational support, trust, and organisational commitment.

In the current research, leader's political skill is another key area because of its growing significance in organisations and its impact on behavioural responses to situational judgements. Information processing is enabled in work environment through political skill thus highlighting the enhanced abilities of politically skilled leaders to enhance performance and productivity (Munyon et al., 2015).

Moreover, effective interpersonal influence is exerted by politically skilled leaders with their capability of genuineness and sincerity (Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, & Shaw, 2007). Networking behaviour is additionally used by politically skilled leaders to establish and influence social capital. In-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviours constitute the two most commonly investigated and evaluated work behaviours as both entail within-role and extra-role behaviours that influence organisational performance (Organ & Ryan, 1995).

A positive relationship between both forms of employee performance and political skill has been established by several quantitative studies (Brouer et al., 2013; Ferris et al., 2007; Witt & Ferris, 2003). With their ability to effectively influence others to fulfil tasks, assignments, and manage organisational resources, politically skilled leaders demonstrate success at the workplace. Hui, Lam, and Law (2000) conducted one of the initial studies in this domain employing a quasi-field experiment to evaluate and compare employee citizenship behaviour level post promotion. It was revealed that post promotion employees who had been involved in OCB tactics showed a tendency to decrease their OCBs level. This finding signals the use of citizenship behaviours for the advancement of one's organisational positioning instead of a return of positive organisational treatment (as would be predictable by social exchange theory; Organ, 1990).

A study by Rioux and Penner (2001) found that managers practiced OCB behaviours to achieve their individual and organisational goals. Accordingly, and on the basis of previous literature, a positive relationship is suggested between both forms of employees' performance and leaders' political skill.

OCB should be included in the study for various reasons such as the mandatory nature of in-role performance unlike the discretionary nature of OCBs (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2005), due to which discretionary acts of citizenship are practised. It is essential to correlate political skill with OCBs as it is necessary to comprehend these behaviours for the benefit of both individuals and organisations and, moreover, with the robust understanding of politically skilled leaders of situations and astute theoretical judgement, this knowledge can be essential to executing suitable supporting behaviours (Ferris et al., 2007; Jawahar et al., 2008). Also, politically skilled leaders may motivate OCB practices aligned with higher recognition amongst their followers (Liu et al., 2007).

The need to cultivate and sustain positive impressions by the politically skilled leaders may prevent them from engaging excessively in assisting others and this may be observed by others. Therefore, the eighth hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 8: Perception of leader's political skills is positively correlated with in-role performance (H8a), OCB-I (H8b) and OCB-O (H8c).

2.8.4 Justification for using a correlational study

The main aim of Study One was to specify a simple correlation between constructs. The researcher believes the constructs are correlated, but does not assume that one construct is dependent upon another. Additionally, in cross-sectional research, it is difficult to manipulate any variable; hence, it becomes difficult to make causal statements about the relationships between variables. In the current study, one or more variables can be used to make inferences about the other(s) without needing to imply causality.

Last but not least, due to method design, variables were collected and measured simultaneously. The first challenge was that it provided no information about the contiguity between different variables: the questionnaire study showed that leaders with low political skill also had low transformational leadership style but we would not be able to discern whether the political skill or the transformational leadership style came first. According to Field (2013), "in correlational research we observe the co-occurrence of variables; we do not manipulate the causal variable first and then measure the effect, therefore we cannot compare the effect when the causal variable is present against when it is absent. In short, we cannot say which variable causes a change in the other; we can merely say that the variables co-occur in a certain way." (p.15)."

2.9 Chapter Summary

Contributions to transformational leadership, organisational politics, and employees' performance literature have flourished over the past two decades. In other words, much has been achieved to comprehend the contents of each construct. However, the interrelation across the three constructs still requires further studies (Morgeson, Aguinis, & Ashford, 2017).

In chapter two, the researcher has theoretically defined, and scrutinised various concepts relevant to the three main areas namely, leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance. More specifically, the researcher focused on transformational and transactional leadership styles, the perceptions of organisational politics, leader political skill, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour.

In the chapter two, the researcher focused on transformational and transactional leadership styles as the two main facets of leadership styles. Developed in the west, the transformational leadership style has progressed and become prevalent in different countries because of the emphasis on development and change initiatives (Rees & Althakhri, 2008). However, the question remains as to whether this style has universal applicability (Bass & Bass, 2009). Also, a number of studies found some opportunities and constraints in practicing transformational leadership that differed from country to country (Litz & Scott, 2017).

Additionally, although several studies indicated the effectiveness of transformational leadership in boosting employees' performance and handling organisational politics, a number of studies also found different results when investigating the relationships in different work contexts in non-western countries (Litz & Scott, 2017; Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2016).

Furthermore, although organisational politics appear in some positive forms including persuasion, networking and building coalitions to the extent that these behaviours coincide with the main organisational goals, yet, the mainstream definition of organisational politics is imbued with negative connotations (Landells & Albrecht, 2015). For instance, organisational politics is characterised as non-

sanctioned behaviours which include control of information, manipulation and intimidation aiming to maximise self-interests. As a result, organisational politics is viewed as inherently immoral and categorised as 'self-interested' or 'covert and crafty' behaviours (Provis, 2006).

The views illustrated in the literature appear somewhat restrictive and several scholars have encouraged further studies to explore employees' experiences towards organisational politics in various contexts (Landells & Albrecht, 2015).

The existing studies on organisational politics have not sufficiently distinguished between the two facets of organisational politics, i.e. the positive and negative side. Remarkably, a number of scholars (Ewen, Wihler, Blicke, Oerder, Ellen, et al., 2013; Hochwarter, 2012) have commenced to support the positive prospects of organisational politics accepting a 'politics is necessary', rather than a 'politics is evil' conceptualisation (Cacciattolo, 2015). Therefore, one of the main objectives of the current research is to explore employees' experiences towards organisational politics in OGS in Oman.

Since the study of leadership styles and organisational politics is affected by the culture surrounding them. The researcher provides an overview of the OGS and national culture. Applying Hofstede's study (2002) for national culture, Omani culture is characterised as high uncertainty avoidance, high-power distance, high on collectivism and low on the masculinity dimension. According to (Moideenkutty et al., 2011), all those dimensions play an important role in forming the ways leaders exhibit their leadership style in Oman.

Last but not least, based on the theoretical discussions, the current study framework and hypotheses have been developed to reflect the interrelation across transformational leadership, transactional leadership style, perceptions of organisational politics, leader political skill, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour to guide the current study. Table 2.3 summarises Study One hypotheses.

Table 2.3 *Study One Hypotheses*

Hypotheses No	Hypotheses
Hypothesis 1	Transformational leadership style is positively correlated with in-role performance (H1a), OCB-I (H1b), and OCB-O (H1c).
Hypothesis 2	Transactional leadership style is positively correlated with in-role performance (H2a), OCB-I (H2b), and OCB-O (H2c).
Hypothesis 3	Transformational leadership is more positively correlated with in-role performance (H3a), OCB-I (H3b), and OCB-O (H3c). [when compared to Transactional leadership style].
Hypothesis 4	Transactional leadership style is positively correlated with perception of organisational politics.
Hypothesis 5	Transformational leadership style is negatively correlated with perception of organisational politics.
Hypothesis 6	Transformational leadership style is more correlated with perception of leader's political skill. [When compared to transactional leadership style].
Hypothesis 7	Perception of organisational politics is negatively correlated with in-role performance (H7a), OCB-I (H7b) and OCB-O (H7c).
Hypothesis 8	Perception of leader's political skills is positively correlated with in-role performance (H8a), OCB-I (H8b) and OCB-O (H8c).

In chapter three, the methodology and research design for conducting the current research are discussed.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

To study interaction across employee performance, organisational politics and leadership styles, a broad range of methods are available. Each method follows its own individual data collection tools, specific results with distinct associated benefits and certain limitations. Typically, methods involving information collection from large participant sample provide expansive information as regards the study factors/variables inter-relationships. Alternatively, the feasibility of methods involved in in-depth exploration or description of individuals' thoughts, feelings and perceptions is doubtful for compiling information from large participant sample. Thus, it is critical to identify the appropriate perspective to study the phenomena and the corresponding study methodology. The current study spans across two phases (i) assessing the association between employee performance, organisational politics and leadership styles, which is feasible through a conceptual framework development and hypotheses testing; (ii) focusing on detailed reviews to develop a comprehensive idea of the potential interrelation across three study areas through qualitative approaches, which can be conducted with the use of a mixed methods approach (interchangeably with "mixed methods"). Bryman (2015) has discussed several mixed method approaches, namely, explanatory sequential design, exploratory sequential design, convergent parallel design, embedded design, multiphase design and transformative design. The current research uses an explanatory sequential design in alignment with Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), whose proposed guide lines are explained later in this chapter.

This chapter discusses the (i) research philosophy; (ii) applied method; (iii) reasons underpinning the choice of mixed methods; (iv) mixed methods design nature and the sequential explanatory design. In addition, the chapter also puts forth a discussion on the ethical issues, data quality procedures and management, instruments, selection procedures, data collection procedures and analysis.

3.2 Methodological Framework

The research process can be symbolised as an onion (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2018). Researchers need to peel away several layers of the onion before reaching the core and central point of the onion. The research onion consists of several layers which are: philosophy, approach, methodological choice, strategies, time horizon, and techniques. Figure 3.1 illustrates the structure of the current study using research onion.

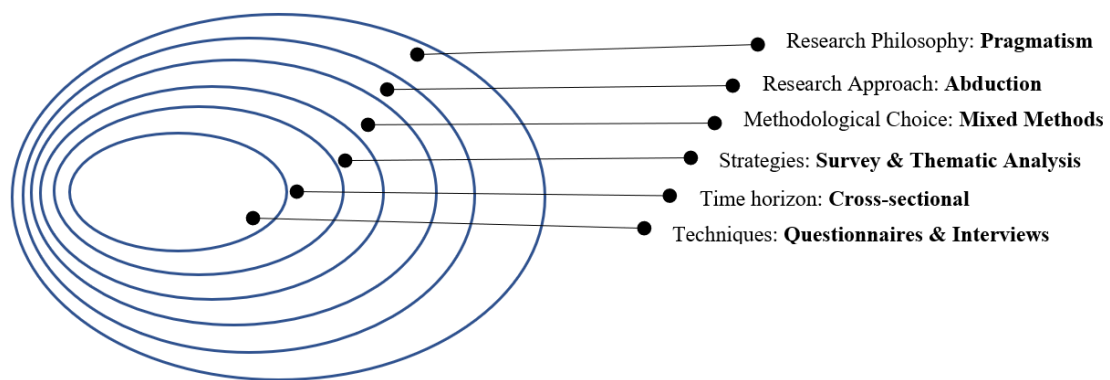


Figure 3.1 Research Process

Source: Adapted from Saunders et al. (2018)

3.3 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy, also referred to as paradigm or worldview, is defined as assumptions about the nature of knowledge and the validity of knowledge acquisition relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Collis & Hussey, 2013; Creswell, 2013). Correspondingly, research philosophy is associated with the knowledge development belief of the researcher that subsequently guides their actions.

For some considerable time, the perfect research paradigm has been a critical debate topic amongst scholars and philosophers.

Diverse paradigms project diverse outcomes and the research objectives and context govern the choice of a particular paradigm (Saunders et al., 2018).

The researcher embraces the research philosophy in a particular study to reflect imperative presumptions of the way he or she perceives the world. The researcher

also ensures that these presumptions bolster the research strategy and the methods selected as part of that strategy. In fact, there are several practical considerations affecting the selection of a specific philosophy; for example, the researcher's particular view of the nature of knowledge and the required formal procedures necessary to acquire or develop it. That is one of the reasons of continuing debate among scientists and philosophers of the appropriate approach to acquire knowledge.

The continuing debate has brought forward two main research paradigms of the positivist and phenomenological (Collis & Hussey, 2013). The substantial variations in these two differing philosophies evidence their popular perception of entailing opposing constructs. The use of experimental and quantitative methods is evident in the positivist paradigm to assess the hypothetical-deductive generalisations in order to identify causal explanations and fundamental laws (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar, & Newton, 2002). The data is generally gathered in the quantitative approach in the form of numerical data with the utilisation of mathematical modelling to measure variables by counting their occurrence frequencies.

Alternatively, qualitative naturalistic approaches are adopted by phenomenological philosophy to review and develop an insight in a specific context of the human experience in an aggregate way. The objective is to understand a particular phenomenon and extend relevant explanation rather than constructing external causes or fundamental laws.

Subsequently, the debate led to the third worldview called pragmatism. It suggests that the research question is the main determinant that constructs the research philosophy and, according to Creswell (2013), this approach is "better" in seeking answers to particular questions. The researcher focuses on the research gap and utilises all approaches available to minimise the gap instead of focusing on single methods. It directs the researcher's attention to the research problem and then employs pluralistic approaches to develop knowledge and solutions to a particular problem.

Also, when the research question fails to justify the use of either a positivist or interpretivist philosophy, the possibility of use of pragmatist's view to employ both philosophies is confirmed.

This implies the use of mixed methods which entails both qualitative and quantitative methodology applications in a complementary manner within one research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Besides, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994) the process of selecting between one position and another is somewhat unfeasible in practice and those who embrace this process are in the position of a pragmatist. The pragmatist does not view the world as an absolute unity (Mertens, 2014). Hence, the researcher has more flexibility to select the appropriate methods, techniques and procedures of research to tackle the research problem and achieve the purpose rather than being restricted to one approach (for instance, either quantitative or qualitative).

Last but not least, a number of scholars have argued that pragmatism had a deep impact on the origin of the field of business management and leadership studies. For example, Harter (2007) claims, in the second chapter of his book entitled “Pragmatism in Leadership Studies”, that pragmatism offers appropriate models and frameworks within which to comprehend leadership. He explains further that the foremost objective of leadership studies is not to develop the one rigid veracity of leadership style; but rather, the objective is to make continual progress toward a more comprehensive and realistic understanding that makes a difference (Harter, 2007).

In the light of the above discussion, the researcher believes that adopting the pragmatist worldview will be appropriate for the current study in order to, first, investigate the interrelation across leadership styles, organisational politics and employees’ performance, and second, to understand participants’ experiences of organisational politics and transformational leadership in OGS. In the current study, the researcher commences with a quantitative approach to measure and test the study constructs but he is highly aligned with the research participants’ real experiences (Creswell, 2013), that aims to furnish an in-depth and comprehensive appreciation of the phenomenon under investigation (Collis & Hussey, 2013).

3.4 Research Approach

The research approach is the second layer of onion research design (Saunders et al., 2018). The research approach is classified into three categories: the deductive, the inductive and the abductive approaches.

The deductive approach emphasises the development of hypotheses based on theory/theories, and then designs a research strategy to examine the hypotheses. On the other hand, the inductive approach begins by collecting data and detailed observations. Then, theories are developed towards the end of the research process as a result of observations and data analysis.

The process of the deductive approach is to commence with a theory/hypotheses and to end with either modification or confirmation of the prevailing theory, while the inductive approach begins with the research questions and ends with emergent theory. Likewise, inductive research starts with empirical data to develop and abstract and from the specific to the general, which is the reverse of the deductive approach (Anderson, 2013). The deductive approach is criticised for the lack of clarity in terms of how to choose theory to be examined via formulating hypotheses. The inductive approach, on other hand, is criticised because no amount of empirical data will necessarily allow theory-developing (Saunders et al., 2018).

The third approach is the abductive approach, which is set to overcome weaknesses associated with deductive and inductive approaches via adopting a pragmatist perspective. At the same time, it has to be elucidated that the abductive approach is similar to inductive and deductive approaches in a way that it is employed to construct theories and make logical inferences.

Based on the explanation above, the current research design follows the abductive approach. The current research employs the literature to study the relationship across transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, perceptions of organisational politics, leader political skill, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Adopting the abductive approach allows the current study to develop hypotheses using theory, links them to the model, allows data gathering and information involving a surveying strategy and examines the corpus in order to find answers to the

research questions and resolve the issues raised (Gill and Johnson, 2010). Additionally, abduction is not associated with or restricted to any particular methodology (Lipscomb, 2012). Therefore, it allows for the development of a number of possible explanations for a phenomenon. According to Dubois and Gadde (2002), employing an abductive approach can be more beneficial than just employing a purely inductive or deductive approach. Finally, an abductive approach is progressively accepted as a valid approach in interpretive research studies (Alrajeh, Fearfull, & Monk, 2012).

3.5 Methodological Choice

In the light of the prior discussions about the research philosophy, researchers and scholars (Bryman & Bell, 2015; Punch, 2013) have developed several methodological choices namely, mono method (quantitative or qualitative), multi methods (quantitative or qualitative), and mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative). Each one of them is unique, has its own goals, and can be undertaken in various ways; hence, the researcher needs to choose the most suitable method to achieve the research objectives. In the current study, the researcher uses mixed methods design to achieve research objectives and the following sections explain mixed methods and provides a justification for the choice.

3.5.1 Nature of Mixed Methods Research

3.5.1.1 Defining Mixed Methods Research

Several scholars have presented various definitions of mixed methods. Since the 20th century researchers and methodologists studying social sciences have used the same study in a combination of quantitative and qualitative data due to the perceived significance of combined approaches to relevantly answer research questions. However, until recently it was identified as mixed methods (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007).

The use of mixed methods involves mixing one quantitative method with at least one qualitative method, although the main philosophical and theoretical essence of the research methodology is concealed in the definition (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). Consequently, another definition was proposed by Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) as “the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or languages into a single study” (p. 17). Subsequently in the field of mixed methods, a study was conducted by Johnson et al. (2007) which sampled 36 authorities’ opinions and based on 19 responses of their sample, they inferred that mixed methods “... amalgamates elements of quantitative and qualitative research approaches (e.g., employ of qualitative and quantitative approaches, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purpose of depth and breadth of apprehension and verification” (p. 123). Simultaneously, Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano, and Morales (2007) defined mixed methods research as:

“a research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing, and mixing either quantitative and qualitative data in a single or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (p. 5).

The mixed method approach implements the pragmatic worldview and presents three benefits based on the aforementioned definitions: (i) reduction of misrepresentative insights of the restricted views (single method designs projections) through establishment of a comprehensive world view. (ii) accounting for a particular research method’s strength and circumventing other methods’ weaknesses for the same case (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Additionally, adaptation of real-world requirements calls for methodologies in combination to suggest relevant solutions.

The establishment of mixed methods was post development of qualitative and quantitative methodologies and was termed as the “third methodological movement” (Creswell, Klassen, Plano Clark, & Smith, 2011), or “third research paradigm” (Johnson et al., 2007). The research community warmly welcomed the mixed methods approach with Mayring (2007) describing it as “a new star in the social science sky.”

Mixed methods approaches are primarily based on the above definitions which aims to review the knowledge gap or research problem from different angles in order to appropriately apply diverse research perspectives. The objective of transitioning away from the quantitative and qualitative purists wars on the past paradigm, underpins this shift termed as “logical and practical alternative” presenting its standalone status making it distinct from quantitative and qualitative approaches with its own vocabularies (Johnson et al., 2007). This primarily provided mixed methods with a philosophical foundation, similar to post-positivism and quantitative methods and constructivism and qualitative methods (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Nevertheless, despite the aim of the mixed methods approach to draw on the respective strengths of qualitative or quantitative approaches as well as addressing their weaknesses rather than substituting either, presents the inherent paradox of mixed methods research goal (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010) with respect to single research studies and across studies in addition to promoting multiple methods use to answer research questions instead of limiting methodology choices (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

For instance, research has shown that the use of variable terminologies like “legitimation” instead of “validity”, “qualitising” for “quantitative data” “inference transferability” instead of “inference”, “transferability”, “legitimation” instead of “validity”, which endures as a dilemma and specifically “qualiquantology” instead of “mixed methods,” which is beyond mixing of methods (Stenner & Rogers, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). With the systematic application by many more researchers in numerous studies the terminology is likely to increase. Also, there is a lack of clarity in the definitions provided by academics on mixing mechanisms of methods or patterns thereby raising questions on the argument of characterisation of the method as a standalone or a third paradigm (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

In most definitions mixed methods apparently is underpinned by the surmise that rather than using one single paradigm it is better to merge the two existing paradigms (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, this might not necessitate the contemplation of the obstructive “whys” and “hows” between qualitative and quantitative methods and the evident benefits from the violation of these propositions. This discrepancy has raised major criticism from both schools by a number of scholars (Symonds & Gorard, 2010).

The emphasis of mixed method definitions on the research methods’ usefulness and polarisation by the two traditional paradigms as affirmed by Symonds and colleague should be entirely dispensed with according to Stephen Gorard (2010) as there is lack of a precise presentation of actual practice in terms of the relationship between researcher and subjects process of cases selection, the number of cases and such issues. Accordingly, the focus of the researchers on the actual research tools quality, the inferences, the use of inferences in specific excellence encouragement via researcher identities and overarching groupings construction, has been suggested by Symonds and Gorard (2010). According to Gorard (2007) mixed methods could possibly imply a study that uses a combination of several techniques towards the achievement of final data set, with the use of ‘multiple methods’ in researches requiring excess of one method and an independent outcome reporting. However, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) have provided insights to certain significant mixed methods definition issues by stating that the mixed method research methodology pertains to wide-ranging inquiry logic that results in precise method selection. In addition, some other mixed method approach attributes have also been established by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) and Creswell and Plano Clark (2011). According to them, the research questions should underpin the mixed method approach and it also goes beyond the traditional methodological patterns with the use of unusual mix of methods to obtain answers to research questions and to add to existing academic knowledge through research questions.

3.5.1.2 Positioning Mixed Methods Philosophically

A literature review of research methods reveals that qualitative and quantitative methodologies project appropriate approaches to answer one or more type of research question.

While all approaches show certain weaknesses (see Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), the use of one singular method have biases-influenced outcomes. Also, according to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), the combination of different methods outcomes results in an improvement of the research results validity. In addition, the self-directive nature of a junior researcher as a beginner necessitates mixed methods use as during the identification and remediation of self-directory dysfunctions, connected information is particularly valuable (Zimmerman, 2008). The utilisation of the respective strengths of quantitative and qualitative methods can lead to a better elaborated or explained comprehension according to Creswell (2009).

Also, the inference of more valid conclusions can be ensured with the use of an additional strategy in this research, like use of interviews with scale measures (Gerald & Darren, 2011).

For instance, the current study uses the Likert type questionnaires for measurement of factors/variables factual level and the use of interviews to explain and identify the interrelation details across the three areas.

Correspondingly, both methods assess related as well as diverse interrelations across the three study areas, with a complementary support of one method to the other in illuminating, explaining and supporting each other's outcomes.

Often, mixed methods approach places importance on qualitative and quantitative methods incorporation strengths and also considers them separately despite the capability of being mixed, particularly through the legitimization process which is "the extent to which the meta-inferences made in a mixed methods research reflect a mixed viewpoint based on the cognitive process of Gestalt switching and integration" (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006, p. 57). According to Bryman (2015), these mixed methods rationalisations are "technical versions." It refers to a mixed methods approach type that rather than focusing on the weaknesses of the two traditional methods lays stress on their strengths. However, the strengthening of vulnerability of quantitative and qualitative methods frontier is recommended by Kelle and Erzberger (2004) stating that quantitative and qualitative methods-based studies indicate their theoretical methodological level strength. They state the fundamental limitation of both methods attributed to the construction of methodological rules for methodological combination in absence of any theoretical

designs association as regards the nature of the subject area under study (Kelle & Erzberger, 2004). Flick (2002), supported this argument to argue that issues emerging due to quantitative and qualitative approaches merging need to be yet sufficiently resolved (Flick, 2002).

Nevertheless, the advocates of the mixed methods approach state the beginning of resolving the issues through a description of the principles of mixed research (Mayring, 2007). The mixed study design according to them is based on this “logic,” and should entail a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure strength supplementation and the prevention of weakness overlap. Thus, it is necessary to highlight for both qualitative and quantitative methods an obvious and systematic consideration (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Similarly, with respect to situational possibilities, for different approaches, it is essential to carefully consider the strengths and weaknesses of each.

Many academicians have cautioned against the unprofessional mixing of both approaches due to the implications of doubtful legitimacy and credibility as regards mixed methods approach (Morse, 2010).

The separate analysis of qualitative and quantitative components is essential according to Morse to retain each paradigmatic position’s strengths, and this limits the feasibility of qualitative and quantitative methods merging within the same study. Correspondingly, studies should refrain from simply combining numbers and other forms of data, although qualitative’ tactics should be combined in the absence of quantitative methods and vice versa (Yin, 2006).

Nevertheless, some scholars argue in favour of mixing methods in a research study with circumventing the breach of either tradition’s philosophical suppositions (Creswell et al., 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). In fact some studies have advanced ignoring the paradigms in alignment with the proposition of Johanson and Brooks (2010) that, mixed methods, in the sense of having a diversity of tools in the toolbox and utilising them as appropriate, is the only sensible method to conduct research without the need to develop a new paradigm or to have employed substitute methods with diverse philosophical foundations. According to the advocates of compatibility thesis in many research settings qualitative and quantitative approaches merging is appropriate, thereby refuting the

concept that fundamental differences (incommensurability) limit the combining of qualitative and quantitative methods (Biesta, 2010).

However, the ontological and epistemological differences of mixed methods have not been fully resolved as agreed upon by several academics favouring the approach; the idiosyncrasies of mixed methods approach from the pragmatic view as an ontological pluralism driven system of philosophy should underpin the establishment of this approach. According to Morgan, the new substitute paradigm of the “pragmatic approach” can address several metaphysical paradigms-based issues with a concurrent production of new prospects for social science field researchers (2007, p.60).

The main motivation behind pragmatism as elaborated by him is not “inquiry” based abstract knowledge execution but an attempt to advance knowledge in the context of desired ends (2007, p. 69). Also, most mixed methods scholars consider pragmatism as mixed methods approach’s ideal philosophical partner (Johnson et al., 2007). Pragmatism ensures epistemological justification and logic according to Johnson and colleagues thus merging two methods can contribute towards optimal structure, and in addressing the research question(s). Also, for mixed methods research, pragmatism constitutes the philosophical foundation thereby shaping as most appropriate and well recognised philosophical basis for mixed methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), mixed methods approach has many forms but typically several key fundamentals forms its basis: (i) Contrary to qualitative and quantitative proponents advocating no similarity in associated paradigms, pragmatism is not confined to singular philosophy or knowledge. Thereby, it permits the combination of both quantitative and qualitative principles in research to adopt the method best suited to answer research questions. (ii) The reality of subjective human experience has underpinned the evolution and development of both approaches. Seemingly, the inclusion of mixed methods in all researches is proposed by this principle, but previous principle contradictorily reflects the sufficiency and appropriateness of a single method depending on the research questions. iii) the truth-seeking dynamic nature is entailed in the third principle

reflecting on the recognition of the well-established dichotomy between the mind and reality by the researcher. Correspondingly, Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) proposed experimentation and exploration of experiences, referring to the interim and unstable nature of truth. The transient nature of paradigms forms the core component of pragmatism, which does not question the essentiality of paradigms and the associated knowledge to guide research methodology. It simply suggests a critical evaluation of the paradigms to help scholars aptly contextualise research and present findings relevant to specific conditions, place and time.

3.5.1.3 Rationale of using Mixed Methods Approach

The current research has adopted the mixed methods approach to use the combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis in order to investigate the interrelation across leadership styles, organisational politics, and employee performance. The use of mixed methods approach extends a clarification of the quantitative results with qualitative follow-up data analysis to beat the single research method adaptation's associated weaknesses (Creswell, 2013). In addition, the critical discussion around leadership styles, organisational politics, and employee performance influence upon the researcher the interpretive nature requiring comprehension of several views as against a positivist or single view. Thus, the use of mixed methods approach can advantageously enrich the research with the quantitative as well as qualitative methods' benefits contributing to a deeper insight into the phenomenon (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2007), a mixed method design offers "richer insights and raise more interesting questions for future research than if only one set of studies is considered" (p. 32). The use of multiple paradigms and worldviews is encouraged by mixed methods research, thus contributing a practical approach to research.

This practical aspect of mixed methods approach stresses the concept of solving a problem with the use of numbers and words, in accordance with the current study thereby adopting a pragmatic approach towards adequately addressing the research question (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Mixed methods research is underpinned by the fact that quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination yields a better comprehension of the research problem as compared to a single approach (Creswell, 2013). Particularly, to gain an insight in the interrelation among the three study areas, it is imperative to assess the existence of any relationship and further explore the relationship details. Mixed-methods research literature review extends further than the qualitative and quantitative data collection and presentation as separate entities (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

It entails application of any one of several designs to incorporate both data sets in order to facilitate the combined working of the data to produce an in-depth rationalisation of research questions.

3.5.1.4 Explanatory Sequential Design (ESD)

Six types of mixed method research designs have been identified by Creswell and Clark (2011, p. 69):

- 1) Convergent parallel design
- 2) Embedded design
- 3) Transformative design
- 4) Multiphase design
- 5) Exploratory sequential design
- 6) Explanatory sequential design

Convergent parallel design (also called convergent design) is the one that the researcher uses to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative data independently from each other and at the same time. Then, the outcomes of each method are compared and interpreted at the end.

The embedded design is the second design that allows the research to be conducted with one of the phases within the other. The transformative design is the third design which focuses on the theoretical framework and is similar to the explanatory design.

The fourth design is the multiphase design which also referred to as the sequential concurrent refers to the repeated use of quantitative and qualitative phases within a programme or through a course of time (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

The fifth design is exploratory sequential design wherein the researcher first begins with a qualitative research phase and explores the views of participants. The data are then analysed, and the information used to build into a second, quantitative phase. According to Creswell and Clark (2007), such design is useful when “measures or instruments are not available, the variables are unknown, or there is no guiding framework or theory” (p. 75). Particular challenges to this design reside in focusing in on the appropriate qualitative findings to use and the sample selection for both phases of research.

The current research employs explanatory sequential design and starts with a quantitative study followed by a qualitative study. The qualitative phase outcomes are specifically used to elucidate the quantitative outcomes in order to achieve a better insight into perception and interrelation of the three study areas namely leadership style, organisational politics and employees’ performance.

The use of this method has been justified for several reasons. When the researcher is assessing relationships to draw an understanding of mechanisms of the relationships, the explanatory sequential design is the appropriate method to use (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The statistical outcomes are improved and elucidated with the qualitative data and their analysis through a profound elaboration of participants’ views. In addition, this design produces themes for the second phases, thereby allowing the researcher to singularly concentrate on specific themes. The current study investigates Oman and (i) the existence of transformational leadership style with (ii) the association between employees’ performance and this leadership style. Also, previous literature review of organisational politics does not present any study focusing on Arab countries. Although, scholars do affirm the existence of this relationship and its effect on employee performance, no research tests corroborate this belief.

There are straightforward advantages of explanatory sequential design utilization as it offers in-depth study prospects of quantitative outcomes. Also, as quantitative study leads to unpredicted results (Morse, 1991) this design is more appropriate for the current study. However, the explanatory sequential design also presents limitations like requirement of excessive time to compile resources and for analysis of both data forms (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006).

Figure 3.2 presents the diagrammatic representation of Mixed Method Sequential Explanatory Model suggested by Creswell. Subsequently, the basis of this notational design, Figure 3.3 presents the model's application construct to the current study.

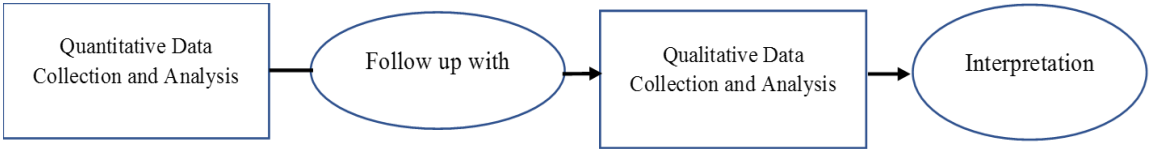


Figure 3.2 Explanatory Sequential Research Design

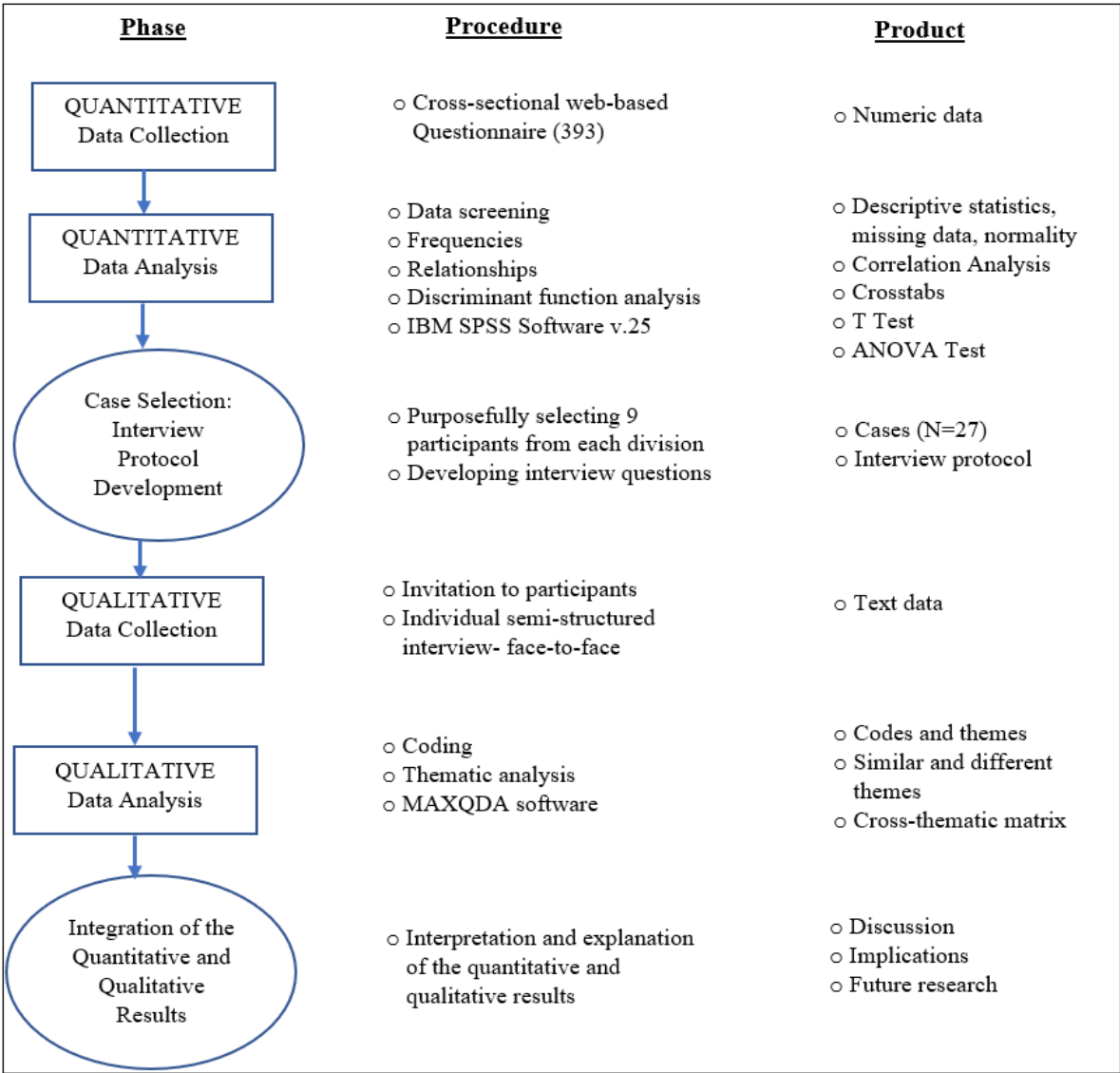


Figure 3.3 Visual Model for Explanatory Sequential Design Study

Source: Adapted from Ivankova et al. (2006).

Figure 3.2 shows that the priority was given to quantitative phase. Priority here means which of the methods, quantitative or qualitative (or both), is given more weight by a researcher throughout the data collection and analysis process in the study (Creswell et al., 2011). Apparently, it is one of the challenges the researcher will face and has to make a decision about and might depend on the interests of a researcher, the audience for the study, and/or what a researcher seeks to emphasise in this study (Creswell et al., 2011).

In the sequential explanatory design, priority, normally, is given to the quantitative approach because the quantitative data collection comes first in the sequence and often represents the major aspect of the mixed-methods data collection process. The smaller qualitative component follows in the second phase of the research. However, depending on the study objectives, the scope of quantitative and qualitative research questions, and the particular design of each phase, a researcher may give the priority to the qualitative data collection and analysis (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009), or both. Such decisions could be made either at the study design stage before the data collection begins or later during the data collection and analysis process. In the descriptive study, from the beginning, the researcher decided to give priority to the qualitative data collection and analysis despite its being the second phase of the research process. The reason was influenced by the purpose of the study to explore and explain the details of the interrelations across leadership style, organisational politics and employee performance. The first, quantitative, phase of the study focuses primarily on measuring the level of all variables from employees' perspective. This is followed by testing the relationship among all variables. Although this phase is robust, the data collection is limited to a cross-sectional survey, and the data analysis employs only a few statistical techniques. The goal of the qualitative phase is to explore and interpret the statistical results obtained in the first, quantitative, phase. To enhance the depth of qualitative analysis, the researcher decided to use semi-structured interviews, which imply extensive data collection from different sources, as well as multiple levels of data analysis (Yin 2003).

3.6 Research Strategy

In the research strategy, the fourth layer, the researcher chooses the most appropriate strategy to answer the research questions and achieve the research objectives. The current research employs two strategies which are the survey strategy and thematic analysis. A survey strategy provides the opportunity to collect a massive amount of data from a large population in an economical and efficient way.

Furthermore, data gathered utilising a survey strategy can be employed to provide possible justifications for particular associations between variables. The survey sample is generally drawn from a defined population and a structured questionnaire is used (Saunders et al., 2018).

The second strategy, also called a method, is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a strategy for identifying, analysing, and reporting themes within data to provide rich details and summary of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). According to Flick (2014), it is deemed similar to other approaches such as discourse analysis, narrative analysis and grounded theory analysis. It is also consonant with different theoretical and epistemological conceptualisations. Additionally, thematic analysis is designed to highlight meaning, understanding and personal experiences, which aligns with the interrelation studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For these reasons, thematic analysis is chosen over other strategies in the current study.

3.7 Research Time Horizons

A research can be undertaken in which data are collected just once as a snapshot taken at a particular time, or else, over a given period of days or weeks, months or years, in order to answer a research question. The snapshot time horizon is referred as cross-sectional, whereas the long-time period is referred as longitudinal (Saunders et al., 2018). The current research is a cross-sectional study because it investigates the interrelation across leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance as a snapshot taken in the first quarter of 2017.

Creswell (2013) argued that due to the time constraints for research projects undertaken for academic purposes, the majority of researches are cross-sectional in nature in that they scrutinise a particular phenomenon at a particular time.

3.8 Data Collection Techniques and Procedures

Crotty (1998) has defined various techniques which are used by a researcher for data generation and collection as procedures, tools, or techniques. An expansive and in-depth definition is provided by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), as regards these techniques, which are referred to as two differential research activities: (i) data collection and (ii) data analysis. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010), methods refer to techniques, ways, or tools that are employed for generation of ethical, accurate, and thoughtful data and also to strategies, techniques or ways used for data manipulation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The initial method choice and selection towards any form of data collection is primarily underpinned by the knowledge of 'knowing what you want to unearth' (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) state that the element of "faithfulness" (p. 95) is present traditionally in both qualitative and quantitative data collection. However, more in-depth and richer data is obtained with the use of mixed methods design as a comrade to use instead of either approach singularly (Sechrest & Sidani, 1995). Advocates of mixed methods design claim that each data collection approach either complements the other through addition of better depth or corroborates the other and augments the understanding of the research (Sechrest & Sidani, 1995; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

In the current research, two main data collection techniques (i) questionnaire; and (ii) semi-structured interviews have been employed in the research design. The questionnaires (online and paper based) were collected in June 2017 while the interview involving the second phase of the study was scheduled for November 2017, due to its dependency on questionnaire results.

The following sections detail the data collection techniques and processes in Study One and study two. The quantitative phase (Study One) marked the commencing of the study.

3.8.1 Quantitative Phase (Study One)

According to Van (2013), objective, observable behaviours entail the use of a quantitative approach towards their interpretation to numerical data sets. A quantitative method presents a primary advantage of higher validity and reliability levels in the data collection and analysis tools and techniques (Kaplan, 2004; van raan, 2013).

A quantitative approach can be designed to be either experimental or non-experimental and the current study uses the non-experimental approach due to the appropriateness of a nonexperimental quantitative design with the research objectives to understand the existential form of the phenomena under study (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2007). Non-experimental approaches are of three types; (i) descriptive; (ii) causal-comparative; and (iii) correlational (Gall et al., 2007). This study employs the use of a correlational approach as it is suitable for testing relationships among variables.

Several scholars have provided various correlational research definitions. According to Devetak, Glažar, and Vogrinc (2010), “correlational studies investigate the possibility of relationships between only two variables, although investigations of more than two variables are common” (p. 328). In other words, it entails seeking out associations across various variables. The research is aimed at the identification and analysis of existing relationships across (more than two) existing variables, which justifies the use of correlational research investigative method. The main purpose of correlational study is to elucidate our understanding of crucial phenomena by investigating the descriptive as well as the correlational statistical analysis among variables.

The researcher felt that using the survey strategy in Study One was the most appropriate method to assess the level of perception of employees across leadership style, organisational politics and to then test the relationship among them. Yin (2009) has highlighted the significance of survey as a strategy to address questions on what, who, how many, where, and how much with a concurrent focus on the events as they occur.

3.8.1.1 Research Target Population

Notwithstanding the research methods applied (quantitative or qualitative), the research is limited and cannot cover everyone, everywhere, doing everything (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Accordingly, the researcher is required to focus on a small group to study and then generalise the outcomes to the entire population. The population is defined as the entire group of units (individuals, organisations, events, objects or items) from which samples are taken for measurement (Singh, 2007).

The target population of the current research is represented by the total number of employees who work in the oil and gas operators in Oman and listed under the oil and gas sector. Operators are referred to the companies which signed an official agreement with Ministry of Oil and Gas in Oman to explore or operate or develop oil/gas fields. Based on a statistical report issued by the Ministry of Oil in 2016, the total number of these companies is 19 and the total number of employees is 17,100. These companies are classified into three categories namely Up-stream, Mid-stream and Down-stream.

3.8.1.2 Sampling Strategy

Data for the current study was gathered from a sample of the target population solely. According to Field (2017) a sample is a small subset of population, while sampling is defined as the act, process, or technique for selecting a sample (Singh, 2007). Basically, researchers use sampling because it requires less resources, time and effort.

While collecting a sample, researchers could select between employing probability-based methods, where the choice is by several “mechanical” procedure including lists of random numbers, or the equivalent. Otherwise, the choice may be made by other methods, invoking some element of judgment such as purposive selection, judgment selection, or non-probability selection (Mason, 2010).

Based on the literature, the probability sampling technique offers a fair opportunity for any case in the population to be chosen. Every case in the population has a non-zero chance for selection and is selected at random; consequently, the results can

be generalised to the entire population. Moreover, probability sampling is often associated with surveys (Bryman & Bell, 2003).

Contrariwise, the researchers employ the non-probability-based selection technique based on their approachability or by purposive personal discernment. Therefore, the sample may or may not represent the whole population precisely. As a result, the findings of the study cannot be used in generalisations pertaining to the entire population (Patton, 2002). The eventual purpose of sampling is to choose several cases from the target population in such a way that descriptions of selected cases precisely depict the total population from which the cases are chosen.

Furthermore, according to Collin (2010), “the quality of the researchers’ meta-inferences in addition to the generalization or transfer to other individuals, groups, and contexts” of outcomes (p. 354) is impacted by the sampling techniques decisions. Meta-inferences in mixed methods present the interpretations of quantitative and qualitative results to be, “two distinct sets of coherent wholes or integrated into either a coherent whole” (Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010, p. 398). The abductive nature of the current research necessitates the use of both deductive and inductive data analyses with differential sampling strategies for quantitative and qualitative components. Thus, in the study, both probability and non-probability sampling strategies have been applied to select the study participants for different study parts.

The current research study utilises probability sampling due to the element of “known probability” as evident in all subjects in the target study population for inclusion in the sample (Field, 2013) and non-probability (purposive) sampling techniques for selection of in-depth interview participants.

The researcher is in alignment with Morse (2003, p. 194) who suggests the observation of methodological suppositions of each paradigm in mixed methods approach; employed probability sampling to conduct the survey and correspondingly, non-probability (purposive) sampling techniques for selection of in-depth interview participants.

Concurrent with recommendations of Rossman and Rallis (2003) and Collins (2010), in the current study, the researcher expands on the nomination of context, setting, and participants towards the construction of sampling frame, and boundary. This is inclusive of activities, cases, individuals or groups that serve as quantitative or qualitative data source in the study and also shape the study scope and limitations.

3.8.1.3 Stratified Sampling

The researcher aimed with the survey to access a representative sample for OGS population covering three OGS divisions (Up-stream, Mid-stream and Down-stream), thus the necessary requirement for formal (random sampling) criteria is met (Flick, 2014). Consequently, both stratified and simple random sampling procedures have been used by the researcher in participants' selection for the study. To ensure equal representation of the three OGS divisions, the population was divided into up-stream, mid-stream and down-stream sub-groups. Concurrent with Stake's (2005) recommendation towards achieving improved research problem understanding, it is imperative to identify significant cases and thus to obtain an improved and comprehensive insight on Oman OGS four companies were selected. Despite the debate on optimal number of companies to be included in a research study, several scholars suggest the suitability of three cases (Perry, 1998; Voss, Tsikriktsis, & Frohlich, 2002). Also accessibility, according to several scholars, (Ramsay & Silverman, 2002; Stake, 2013) should be prioritised and thus, due to previous networking, these companies were selected by the primary researcher. Four companies, two- up-stream, one-midstream and one-downstream, agreed to participate and subsequently, each group's participants were contacted.

Due to the low response rate (6% as compared to 20%) from one of the up-stream companies, the responses of both up-stream companies were merged for a better up-stream division representation.

Yin (2003) suggests a critical selection of case towards improved analysis and correspondingly, the current study will benefit from data collection from the three segments with the use of a mixed methods approach towards an improved perception of the phenomenon.

3.8.1.4 Sample Size

Sample size calculations permit researchers to infer robust conclusion from the restricted amount of data and also allow generalisation of results. Yet, it is vital to recollect that since it is difficult to predict the result of any study, sample size calculations always remain approximations. The approximation of the minimum sample size needed for any study is not a single exclusive approach, but the concepts underlying most approaches are comparable (Gogtay, 2010). The time, accessibility, support facilities and funding must be taken into account because they play a critical role in the determination of the sample size. Punch (2005) indicates that the determination of sample size is also dictated by the types of analyses and the margin of error the researcher can tolerate.

There are several methods to calculate the sample size which incorporate different formulas. For example, the researcher used a sample size calculator in <http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html> website. The recommended minimum sample size was 376. Additionally, Yamane's formula (1967) is one the most frequently used method in the literature to calculate the sample size. The formula includes the size of the population and the level of precision required:

$$[n = N / 1 + N (e)^2]$$

(n) is the sample size; (N) is the population size; and (e) is the desired level of precision.

The level of precision (sometimes called the sampling error) is the range in which the true value of the population is estimated to be. Several studies in organisational behaviours studies estimate the population's characteristics to be within plus or minus 3% to 5% of its true values (Saunders et al., 2018). Consequently, the desired level of precision would be +/- 5% in Study One. The sample size is calculated based on above formula as follows:

The sample size for employees' population = 390 $[n = 17100 / 1 + 17100(0.05)^2]$.

The researcher found the total number of employees in the selected four companies is 1351 which exceeds the proposed number above, hence the researcher decided to send it to all employees (1351) to increase the response rate and give equal opportunity to every employee to participate.

3.8.1.5 Questionnaire

Survey strategies employing questionnaires are common as it allows the collection of uniform data from a large population in a highly efficient and economical way. It also allows the collection of quantitative data which can be used to conduct several descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

A questionnaire is utilised to gather information from populations related to the distribution and association of study variables within that population (Arber, 2001). It is employed as a tool to get written or verbal responses from individuals to a specific set of statements or questions.

There are some advantages of employing questionnaires to gather data. First, it can be distributed over wide geographical areas to large numbers of people at a lower cost compared to other methods such as observations and interviews.

Second, it gives the flexibility to respondents to answer at their own convenience without the presence of the researcher, which may influence their responses (Oppenheim, 2000).

Third, as illustrated by Krosnick (2018), a questionnaire provides respondents some flexibility in responding to the questions and permit them to convey their views easily without being identified or penalised. Thus, the removal of researcher bias in the actual physical encounter is beneficial.

Nevertheless, employing the questionnaire brings with it a number of limitations. First, questionnaires can limit the opportunity to request respondents to provide further explanations and clarifications to illustrate their views.

Second, respondents have limited opportunity to ask for clarification, in case the question is vague and so, may not all understand questions in the same way (Krosnick, 2018). Third, some people face some challenges in articulating written responses.

3.8.1.6 The Questionnaire Design

The study employed the use of questionnaire constructed in western studies with a successful use in diverse cultural settings and countries. The questionnaire consists of four parts: the demographic questions, the Full Range of Leadership model items, organisational politics items and the employees' performance items.

Basic demographic information is asked at the start of the survey since they provide valuable information to the study. The inclusion of certain standard demographic information maximises the valuables of the study to the researchers, scholars and other interested stakeholders (Rattray & Jones, 2007). The demographic section includes gender, educational level, job level, and age.

The second part of the questionnaire focuses on Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) which investigates the different styles of leadership: (i) transformational leadership style; (ii) transactional leadership style; (iii) and passive/avoidant leadership style. MLQ was constructed by Bass (1985) and subsequently developed by Bass and Avolio (1993).

Different versions of the MLQ have been developed in over 23 countries and translated into 13 languages. Initially, the MLQ consisted of 73 items and was based on the original five dimensions identified by Bass (1985). However, over the last 25 years, a number of questions have been altered, added or eliminated. Currently, the MLQ consists of 45 items. Thirty-six items focus on the nine subscales of the three independent variables, and the other nine items evaluate three leadership outcomes: extra satisfaction, effectiveness, and effort (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

The questionnaire in Study One used 36 items which assess the Full Range of Leadership model. More specifically, twenty items focused on the transformational leadership construct.

The twenty items are distributed to cover the following five dimensions, idealised influence (attributed), idealised influence (behaviour), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. Each dimension is evaluated by four questions.

This is followed by eight items to measure the transactional leadership construct; four items to evaluate the contingent reward and another four to evaluate management-by-exception (active) subscales. Finally, eight items are used to measure the passive/avoidant leadership construct which include two dimensions, management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire subscales. Each dimension is assessed by four questions as well. However, based on the results collected from the pilot test, a number of items were rephrased as explained in the coming sections. The permission to use this instrument in the current study was obtained by the researcher by adhering to the guidelines described by the publishers on their website, www.mindgarden.com. In the assessment of leadership styles, several reasons contribute to its successful use. First, in the measurement of transformational and transactional leadership styles, MLQ profile is a key instrument which offers researchers a comparatively balanced and equitable leadership behaviours evaluation (Lievens Pascal Van Geit Pol Coetsier, 1997).

Second, since 1995, over 200 journal articles and doctoral dissertations have used this instrument attributable to its robust reliability and construct validity (Bass & Avolio, 2000) moreover it has strong conceptual and empirical links.

The survey asked the employees for an evaluation of their direct manager's typical particular behaviour, and their responses were charted on five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (not at all) to 5 (frequently, if not always).

As proposed by Bass and Avolio (1993), the current study used a shorter questionnaire version that included four items against each component thus resulting in a total of 36 items. Sample items included:

- "Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts".
- "Fails to interfere until problems become serious".
- "Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems."

The second perspective of organisational politics was investigated with the use of two scales: (i) the perceptions or organisational politics (POP) scale and (iii) political skill inventory scale.

Six items from a scale developed by Hochwarter et al. (2003) were adopted to measure the POP. Evidently, this scale has been expansively used in the majority of POP researches and thus towards improvement in its reliability and validity it has been developed several times (Bedi & Schat, 2013). Their responses were charted

on five-point Likert scale which ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items included:

- “There is a lot of self-serving behaviour going on in my organisation”.
- “People do what is best for them, not what is best for the organisation”.
- “Individuals are stabbing each other in the back to look good in front of others”.

The third perception of political skill of leader was assessed with the use of a third scale, employing the 18 statements of the Political Skill Inventory Scale (PSIS) by Ferris, Treadway, et al. (2005). The survey asked the employees for a rating of their direct manager’s political skill, and their responses were charted on five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items included:

- “Spends a lot of time at work developing connections with others”.
- “Pays close attention to people’s facial expressions”.
- “Is able to communicate easily and effectively with others”.

The last perspective of the employee performance was investigated with the use of self-report job performance developed by Williams and Anderson (1991).

The scale employed was a five-point Likert scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and it accounted in questions focussing on the in-role performance, organisational citizenship behaviour- Individual (OCB-I), and organisational citizenship behaviour- organisational (OCB-O). The survey included seven items for each one of the components of the full range, thus totalling 21 items.

During the coding, items such as “I take undeserved work breaks” with negative connotation were reversed to ensure positive wording of the scale before the construction of scale scores. Correspondingly, for selection of 1 by a respondent, it was replaced with 5 during reversal of items that were negatively worded (1 =5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2 and 5=1).

This particular approach was aligned with the similar researches so as to ensure achieving objective and less biased data as regards in-role performance and OCB (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007; Wang et al., 2011). Sample items included:

- “Adequately completes assigned duties”.
- “Assist supervisor with his/her work (when not asked)”.
- “Adhere to informal rules devised to maintain order”.

Last but not least, employees' performance scale contains some items which are to be reverse scored. Reverse scoring means that the numerical scoring scale moves in the opposite direction. More specifically, the majority of questionnaire items are positively worded questions (e.g. "Adequately completes assigned duties"), but there are few questions negatively worded questions (e.g. "I take undeserved work breaks"). According to Weijters, Baumgartner, and Schillewaert (2013), negatively worded items work as cognitive "speed bumps" and can cause a slower and more careful reading. Correspondingly, during the analysis stage, in reversed questions, for selection of 1 by a respondent, it was replaced with 5 during reversal of items which were negatively worded (1 =5, 2=4, 3=3, 4=2 and 5=1). All reversed questions are illustrated in table 5.2 using "R" letter.

Subsequently for analyses, questionnaires were serially numbered and data input into the IBM SPSS v23 software.

3.8.2 Reliability and Validity of the Survey Instrument

3.8.2.1 Reliability

Reliability and validity are the two most important and fundamental characteristics of any measurement tool.

While reliability relates to the consistency and accuracy of a measure, validity relates to the suitability of the measure to evaluate the construct it purports to measure.

Reliability is defined as the extent to which the research instrument produces the same results over time. It is the consistency of scores over time or across raters (Golafshani, 2003). There are several methods to measure the reliability and these are categorised into two main forms: repeated measurement and internal consistency. Repeated measurement focuses on measuring the same construct at different times. A common form of repeated measurement is test–retest method. In test–retest reliability, the researcher gives the same questionnaire to the same respondents in two different time slots to check whether the answers they provide

have not changed too much. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2013), the time slot should be between one week to two weeks to reduce the risk of carry over effect.

Internal consistency reliability is the second form of reliability. It investigates how well the items measure a single construct or how homogeneous the items of a test are. There are two key methods to calculate internal consistency reliability namely, split half reliability and coefficient alpha.

In split half reliability, the researcher first creates a large set of questions which address the same construct and then randomly splits the questions into two parallel sets/forms. The researcher distributes both sets to the same sample of individuals.

After that, the researcher calculates respondents' scores on each 'half test'. The correlation between the two parallel sets is the estimate of reliability and is expected to be over 0.8 to conclude both split measure the same construct (Brubaker, 2012). The issue with split half method is that there are many ways in which a set of data can be split into two and subsequently the results could be a product of the way in which the data were split. In order to overcome this issue, a different form of internal consistency was developed by Cronbach (1951) called Coefficient alpha or Cronbach's alpha reliability test (Burns & Burns, 2008).

Cronbach's alpha splits data in two in every possible way and computes the correlation coefficient for each split. Currently, Cronbach's alpha is deemed the most widely used measure of reliability in research studies. The commonly agreed cut-off point for Cronbach's alpha is .70 (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012).

In Study One, the researcher used Cronbach's alpha to measure the reliability of the data. The transformational leadership factor scored .93 while transactional leadership factor scored .76. In addition, the findings of the reliability figures for perceptions of organisational politics and leader's political skill were .91 and .92 respectively. Last but not least, in-role performance factor achieved .93, OCB-I factor scored .90, and OCB-O factor was .89. The findings of the reliability figures from the current study are concurrent with the recommended guidelines by several scholars (Field, 2013; Muijs, 2010) who specify that it should be at .7 or above in social science.

3.8.2.2 Validity

Validity is focusing on the main question: are we measuring what we are supposed to be measuring? Although it might sound simple, it is often not that simple in social science studies because many concepts such as self-concept or attitudes cannot be measured directly. That is why developing the right measurement instrument with the right manifest measures of the latent concept is obviously crucial and not necessarily simple to achieve (Golafshani, 2003).

Based on literature, there are several types of validity, for example face, content, concurrent, convergent and discriminant validity (De Vaus, 2002). Face validity consists of asking respondents to review the instrument and provide feedback whether the instrument appears valid to them.

Content validity focuses on the content of the manifest variables (e.g. questions of a questionnaire) to check whether or not it is appropriate to measure the latent concept (e.g. perceptions of organisational politics, organisational citizenship behaviour) that the researcher is attempting to measure (Guercini, 2014). According to Muijs (2010), the key judgement to decide whether an instrument is content valid is based on its accordance to a theory of what it is and how the concept works.

In the current study, to test the clarity of the items used in Study One questionnaire and their relevance to their scales, face and content validity for the questionnaire were verified using a designed questionnaire evaluating form. The previous successful use of all the scales in diverse cultural contexts and countries is evidenced and the questions were initially validated in the English language survey, which was subsequently adapted to Arabic using the dual-translation procedure to ensure language equivalence and validity of scales. The adopted dual-translation procedure involved: (i) translation of questions from English to Arabic; (ii) review of Arabic version by three external academics and five practitioners/employees for the purposes of ensuring quality and clarity refinement; (iii) translation back to English using translation agency; (iv) comparison of both the English versions. This process introduced a surety of language equivalence as well as appropriateness of scale questions.

Further, the researcher employed a number of measures for establishing reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. These measures included Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Maximum Shared Variance (MSV).

According to Hair et al. (2012), the CR of all the constructs should be .7 or above, and AVE should be greater than .5 In order to ensure the presence of convergent validity. For discriminant validity, the AVE of each construct should be greater than MSV.

Table 3.1 indicated a summary of CR, AVE and MSV according to these criteria.

Table 3.1 *Scale properties of data*

All Scale Dimensions	CR	AVE	MSV
Transformational Leadership- Idealised Influence (Attributed)	.90	.69	.55
Transformational Leadership- Idealised Influence (Behaviour)	.87	.62	.53
Transformational Leadership- Inspirational Motivation	.92	.74	.55
Transformational Leadership- Intellectual Stimulation	.93	.76	.35
Transformational Leadership- Individual Consideration	.83	.55	.32
Transactional Leadership- Contingent Reward	.83	.56	.26
Transactional Leadership- Management-By-Exception (Active)	.70	.52	.14
Passive/Avoidant Leadership- Laissez-Faire	.84	.58	.56
Passive/Avoidant Leadership- Management-By-Exception (Passive)	.85	.58	.56
Political Skill- Social Astuteness	.88	.61	.51
Political Skill- Networking Ability	.90	.60	.38
Political Skill- Apparent Sincerity	.82	.60	.51
Political Skill- Interpersonal Influence	.90	.68	.38
Perceptions of Organisational Politics	.91	.64	.25
In-Role Performance	.93	.74	.60
Organisation Citizenship Behaviour-Individual	.90	.64	.60
Organisation Citizenship Behaviour-Organisation	.85	.66	.41

Furthermore, since the data was collected using a one-time survey from single respondents, common method variance bias had to be effectively evaluated. The researcher employed both procedural and statistical approaches to reduce the potential of common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

In the procedural approaches, the researcher ensured respondents of the anonymity and confidentiality of the answers provided. This minimised the possibility that the respondents would respond in a dishonest or artificial way (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Besides, the questions were randomly organised into the questionnaire to avert respondents from establishing cause–effect associations among the research constructs.

Regarding the statistical procedures, the researcher performed an exploratory factor analysis using Principal Axis Factoring method and the unrotated factor solution. Seventeen factors emerged to explain 67.32% of the total variance. Further, the researcher employed a Harman's single factor test to assess if the majority of the variance can be explained by a single factor.

The test indicated the largest factor explained only 25.81% of that variance which is below the threshold for demonstrating common method bias (.50).

After finalising validity and reliability of all scales, the researcher tested Study One hypotheses as presented in chapter four.

3.8.2.3 Survey Procedures

The researcher needs to consider the context's specificities to develop an appropriate and realistic strategy to collect data. More specifically, several researchers found it somewhat difficult to conduct their research studies in Oman because some companies and government institutions are usually hesitant to participate in studies which particularly evaluate the behaviours of others or criticise the system. A researcher should take advantage of his or her personal and informal contacts to speed up the process of receiving consent to conduct a study in Oman as it may take years (Al-Ghailani, 2005; Al-Maawali, 2000).

Accordingly, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the University of Salford indicating the importance of the study and seeking companies' collaboration to gain access and facilitate the field study process. Then, the researcher used his network to deliver the letter in-hand to the executive team in each company. The letter was beneficial and welcomed by company's management. After receiving the ethical approval from the university of Salford ethical committee, the researcher sent a copy of the questionnaire and a cover letter to each company.

The cover letter encompassed an introduction about the researcher, contact details, the title of the study, the aim of the study, the purpose behind collecting data, the assurance of confidentiality, restriction of its use to the scientific research only and an invitation to participate and complete the questionnaire accurately and honestly. Then, the researcher contacted the organisations and explained the study and the requirements to conduct this study. The distribution and collection procedures for the questionnaires were organised by the organisations' "contact person".

Obviously, to facilitate the process, the researcher identified one contact person in each organisation where questionnaires were distributed.

These people were mostly from Human Resources Department. They were individually briefed about what was required and were asked to follow up the questionnaire reminder and collection.

Herein, via internal e-mail system a cross-sectional study from all the four companies amongst 1351 employees was contacted. Specifically, the process involved an email communication from the Human Resources Department to inform all employees about the questionnaire and encourage their participation in this study by taking an online-based survey via Survey Monkey System. Additionally, a total of 300 paper-based copies of the survey with envelopes were additionally distributed by the primary researcher due to the preference of paper-based forms by some employees. This provided the research with a confidential and anonymous format to collect data by offering direct data integration features into the IBM SPSS, and custom report generation. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data and the following procedure was followed:

- 1.) The Human Resources Managers (HRM) were provided with an introductory e-mail (Appendix B) for subsequent circulation to all company employees. Based on the parent organisation, each HRM was sent a different study link although, the basic information detailed in the email as same:
 - a. Brief information on study purpose
 - b. Participation request
 - c. Online survey link, with consent form and as the forms were made available in two languages i.e. Arabic and English, two separate online links were provided.

2.) An electronic signature on the consent form was requested by the participants agreeing to participate in the study and the giving of consent made the survey automatically available to the participant.

The expected four weeks allotted to data collection, were stretched to more than four weeks owing to the factors of: (i) official holidays, (ii) participant unavailability, (iii) travel arrangements. The time period of one month was given to the participants to complete the survey.

A few participants completed the survey within two weeks.

Then, the follow-up process, through contacting, visiting and opening lines of communication with the contact person in each organisation, aimed to encourage participants to complete questionnaires and allow them to be collected on time.

Two weeks following the sending of the first email a gentle reminder was sent by the Human Resources Department to all the participants.

The entire process brought forward a total sample size of 414, of which 21 cases were excluded due to the lack of information, with the final sample size included in the final analysis post deletion of missing data cases was $N = 393$.

3.8.3 Qualitative Phase (Study Two)

In addition to the difference in underlying philosophy, qualitative and quantitative methods differ in the strategies of data collection. A qualitative researcher focuses on the construct of the reality in his or her mind based on his or her interpretation and understanding. Thus, the subjective nature of phenomena is targeted by the qualitative research, which may include experiences, perceptions, and feelings regarding behaviour, attitudes, peoples, events, relationships, and objects (Flick, 2014).

The focus on “how” and “why” is evident in qualitative research instead of “what”, “where” and “who” with attention to interpretations as compared to measures and names.

In this study, the second, qualitative phase followed the quantitative data collection to develop an understanding of the social phenomenon with respect to opinions of the individuals involved, to contextualise leadership positions' issues with an inclusion of the individuals engaging in the organisation's political environments. To attain the aim of building an insight and appropriately interpret first phase outcomes, an exploratory open-minded approach was utilised by the researcher to access the multiple perspectives of the participants on the study phenomena (Glesne, 2006).

The qualitative phase in explanatory design is typically presented diagrammatically in lower case letters, however the current study data explored, explained and enriched the study's quantitative phase to develop a comprehensive and fuller picture of the phenomenon (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Amongst the several qualitative research methods, including case study, ethnography, constant comparative method, action research and thematic analysis, the qualitative study phase employed thematic analysis as part of the explanatory sequential mixed-method design, to provide detailed data sets description. This study, for data collection, utilised semi-structured in-depth interviews that were conducted with consenting participants.

The purpose of study two was to develop an understanding of employees' experiences related to transformational leadership style and its effect on work performance in conjunction with leaders' political skill and organisational politics. The study also aimed at to comprehending the employees' perspective on the transformational leadership style's "appropriateness" in Omani culture.

In order to identify the best people available to give information on the research questions, the researcher chose the purposive sampling approach.

3.8.3.1 Purposive Sampling and Sample Size

The researcher uses a non-probability sampling design in the second study of this research, which is referred to as purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is defined as a "random selection of sampling units within the segment of the population with the most information on the characteristic of interest" (Guarte & Barrios, 2006,

p. 277). According to Bryman and Bell (2015), purposive sampling is commonly selected by the researcher to identify the most appropriate participants available to provide information and answer research questions. Tongco (2007) argues that the foundational bias of the purposive sampling contributes to its effectiveness, and the method remains vigorous even when examined against random probability sampling.

Besides, Parahoo (2014) claimed that purposive sampling is an appropriate method for exploring the leadership styles and has been used frequently to understand peoples' experiences or views.

The approach of determining the sample size in qualitative methods is different from quantitative methods. It is often smaller than that used in quantitative research methods.

The reasons are that qualitative research methods are often focusing of garnering an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon or emphasizing the meaning (and heterogeneities in meaning)—which are often concerned with the 'how' and 'why' of a particular issue, process, subculture, situation, scene or set of social interactions. In-depth interview work does not aim to make generalisations to a larger population of interest and does not tend to rely on testing hypothesis but rather is more inductive and emergent in its process. However, there are still different views of the appropriate sample in qualitative studies. According to Crouch and McKenzie (2006), the sample size of fewer than 20 participants is sufficient to inculcate a "frank" and "open" information exchange as the number supports establishment and maintenance of a close relationship and reduce bias and validity threats as contained in qualitative research. However, Baker, Edwards, and Doidge (2012) suggest a range of between 12 and 60 and it depends on the data saturation.

Saturation has received prevalent acceptance as an important principle to think about when mulling over sample size decisions in qualitative research.

Saturation is defined by several authors as the point at which the data collection process no longer tenders any relevant or new data (Mason, 2010). It is usually taken to indicate that, on the basis of the data that have been garnered or examined hitherto, further data collection and/or analysis are redundant. In other words, conceptual categories in a research project can be considered saturated "when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties of your core theoretical categories"(Charmaz, 2006, p. 113).

In mixed methods research sampling plays a significant role and is associated with the design of the study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Typically, a quantitative sample is larger in size as compared to qualitative sample (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Data collection is dependent in mixed methods sequential designs as one data form constructs with or on another. Thus, more quantitative results detail is available with the use of sequential explanatory design with the qualitative data.

Creswell (2007) suggests the significance of using the same subjects in both study phases when employing the sequential designs. However, it is not necessary for the qualitative phase to maintain the same sample size (Creswell, 2013). The pertinent aspect is to purposively select the qualitative sample from the quantitative sample to identify participants that provide ideal relevant information towards the quantitative results explanation (Creswell & Clark, 2007). Bryman suggests that when conducting a mixed methods, the findings from the survey can be used as the basis for the selection of a purposive sample (Bryman, 2015).

While collecting the data for Study One, the researcher posed a question at the end of the questionnaire asking the respondent of his/her willingness to participate in Study Two. The researcher received thirty-seven positive responses. In alignment with data collection and analysis saturation principle, the total number of the participants in Study Two was twenty-seven participants selected purposively. The twenty-seven participants consisted of twenty-one males and six females from geographically diverse sections throughout the oil and gas sector in Oman.

Ten participants were selected from the upstream division, eight participants from midstream division, and nine participants from the downstream division. The sampling strategy involved the utilisation of purposive sampling so that selection of participants was restricted to individuals at various leadership levels in each sector of the organisation. There were three categories of participants: employees, entry level leaders and middle to senior management.

The research focused more on middle and senior managers due to their better positioning towards providing relevant answers to research questions. The purposive sampling strategy was designed following Professor Flicks' suggestion for selection

of participants by their relevance to addressing the research questions “rather than their representativeness” (Flick, 2014, p. 175).

3.8.3.2 Interview

Rubin and Rubin (2011) define interviews as a form of data collection which is in-depth, detailed and rich and does not categorise answers to specific questions. The researcher is provided with underlying information as regards feelings, experience and emotion using the interviews.

The current study employs the use of interviews to review emerging themes and explanations that result from the quantitative analysis conducted to assess employees’ perceptions of leadership styles and organisational politics.

To gather verbal data the researcher will use interviews within this research towards developing an insight on the first study outcomes explanation.

Typically, the interviews concentrated on the experiences and perceptions of participants with reference to study issues to develop an in-depth comprehensive understanding rather than general and abstract answers to the researchers’ questions.

The key reason as emphasised by Easterby-Smith, Golden-Biddle, and Locke (2008) for holding qualitative interviews is to develop an insight on the construction of realities by individuals based on how their complicated personal beliefs and values frameworks has been shaped by their world experience over time. According to Hall (1996), in addition to in-depth data qualitative interviews are so designed to support practical social science researches owing to their comprehensive expression of the participants’ views.

Flick (2014), explains that the researcher benefits through the interview approach by gaining a comprehensive understanding of the interviewee’s experiential world. Rubin and Rubin also highlight the significance of conducting a “responsive interview” (2012, p.37) to obtain vivid thematic material based in-depth information. Thus, the interview participants should comprehend the value of research to them with the researchers’ integrity assurances to ensure a collaborative approach.

According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), the supportive attitudes of interviewers underpin the efficacy of interviews in addition to the interviewer and the interviewee relationship of trust leading to a more give-and-take scenario in the interview dialogue.

The scholars have identified three main interview types according to Saunders (2011): (i) structured; (ii) semi-structured; and (iii) unstructured. Correspondingly, Patton (2002) for instance showed the use of following terminology: (i) informal conversational interview; (ii) the general interview guide approach; and (iii) the standardised open-ended interview.

Similarly, Bryman and Bell (2007) provided distinction between the (i) standardised and (ii) non-standardised interviews. Thus, semi-structured and unstructured interviews can be classified as qualitative and structured (standardised) interviews can be classified as quantitative based on these various views. The standardised interviews primarily follow a fixed structure with specific questions on the schedule (Yin, 2011).

To identify the proper type of interview the researcher should use for data collection method, Anderson (2013) suggests identifying one that provides sufficient information. Also, each interview type projects specific consequences as regards the approach adopted for pitching questions, data recording and data analysis (Anderson, 2013).

Table 3.2 *Types of Interviews*

Type of Interview	Structured Interview	Semi-structured Interview	Un-structured Interview
Purpose	Predetermined standardised questions to be asked in standardised order	Themes and questions are determined; however, the order of the questions may vary depends on the flow of the interview	No or limited sets of questions and interview takes a non-directive approach.
Method	Quantitative	Qualitative	Qualitative

Source: Anderson (2013)

The three main semi-structured interviews guidelines as explained by Mason (2002) are:

- i. The style should follow a comparatively informal discussion than structured and formal question and answer style.
- ii. The researcher should moderately follow a discussion with a range of themes, topics or issues instead of structured and formal questions list.
- iii. Interactive method should be used to obtain data.

The rationale for selecting the semi-structured interview is to be in alignment with the primary purpose of the research's second phase to conduct a detailed assessment and to offer explanations for the first phase outcomes; the study considers the use of semi-structured face-to-face interviews most appropriate.

In Omani society organisational politics holds a sensitive place and the interviewer with the use of semi-structured interview has the advantage to understand areas like perception, feeling and emotions that are not easily observed and also conduct an appropriate discussion of sensitive issues (Creswell & Clark, 2007; Glesne, 2006). This approach offers a primary advantage of permitting the researcher to assure the study participants of process confidentiality as no opinions were recorded on paper.

The inhibition of taking accountability of their contributions was a genuine concern in the context of Omani society among participants. Thus, as a tool to gather information, the interview process ensured a comfortable means for the participants. This process offers the benefits of being less structured and daunting as compared to formal interviewing structured approaches (Drever, 1995).

Several scholars additionally support the use of semi-structured interview method as part of a qualitative approach towards an effective means to interpret previously collected data or results (Creswell et al., 2011).

This study thus necessitates the use of qualitative interviews to develop an insight into the perception of the relationship between leadership style, organisational politics and its impact on their job performance.

Saunders (2011) presents the significance of semi-structured interviews in terms of stressing the 'what' and 'how' and the 'why' of a particular phenomenon. Thus, in consideration of *what, how* and *why*, of the research questions to attain interviewees' ideas and opinions within Omani perspective it was logical to choose this interview type.

Additional depth to the subject matter has been provided by the explanatory nature of semi-structured interviews that further explains the quantitative data collection. This method allows for the merging of quantitative and qualitative data sets to ensure a detailed study phenomenon exploration (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

3.8.3.3 Interview Protocol

Study two is explanatory in nature, thus warranting the use of semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire outcomes were used to inform the study details initially in alignment with qualitative interviews' purposes to achieve a social actor's experience' understanding (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011) and to "enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 2002, p. 341). The interview practices recommended by Patton (2002) formed the basis of interview schedule design. For instance, according to Glesne (2015) interviewing is "the process of getting words to fly" (p. 102), which can be achieved by the development of clearly defined topic, questions appropriate to the topic, consummate skill use during interviewing and questions pitching to the right participants. Glesne (2015) suggests the emergence of new questions during the semi-structured interview process which can alternate for pre-planned questions. Thus, based on the interviewee's answers, this allows for the exploration of further alternative explanations by the researcher. Patton's (2002) interview guide approach corroborates this approach. For instance, based on the first phase outcomes, an interview guide was developed by the researcher with a list of questions. Concurrent to Patton's (2002) interview guide, the pre-established questions were designed to explore new insights by the researcher.

It was essential to conduct a pilot-test with the aim at verifying the suitability of questions and the type of answers provided (see Appendix D).

The pilot interview was conducted with three participants, as preparation for the study two. The vague or ambiguous questions were rephrased or explained in a better way. The pilot-test also provided the researcher the opportunity to analyse a small amount of data before undertaking the whole process (Majid, Othman, Mohamad, Lim, & Yusof, 2017).

The researcher mainly focused on employees' beliefs towards organisational politics and relevant transformational leadership style questions as aligned with a pragmatic approach by Meuser and Nagel's (2009) to data analysis, which yield focus on isolation of only relevant passages and transcribing with codes and thematic comparisons.

Thus, the primary researcher designed two main questions to assess the employees' perceptions of impact of the two parameters on work performance, to ask about the main transformational leadership constraints and their impact on individual managerial styles. A digital recorder was used to record the interviews for later transcription and all interviews lasted between 35 minutes to 98 minutes in duration.

3.8.3.4 Interview Procedures

The voluntary participation nature of the interview was amply clarified to the participants, who could (i) refrain from answering any question they seemed fit not to answer, (ii) at any time they could stop the interview.

These face-to-face interviews were conducted at a convenient location for the participant. Permission to tape-record the interviews was taken from the participants. The interview purpose was to identify their work place organisational politics perception and its effect on their performance, and this purpose was explained. Subsequently, questions pertaining to transformational leadership and its impact on their workplace were asked. Participants were guaranteed the protection of their privacy, that the use of collected data was solely for study purposes only, and they were assured of nondisclosure of interview communication to management.

The researcher encouraged participants to share actual worksite occurrences but sans naming any other employee for privacy protection. The researcher confirmed that all the interviews would be personally transcribed by him.

3.9 Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), the analysis of data in mixed method research entails both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The appropriate analysis methods have been used to analyse each data set, i.e. quantitative analysis of quantitative data and vice versa (Creswell, 2013).

As explained by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), despite the evident similarities of data preparation, exploration, analysis, representation, and validation, the study design underpins the analysis in mixed methods research. The current study's use of sequential explanatory design necessitates the employment of sequential data analysis followed by the final data integration phase.

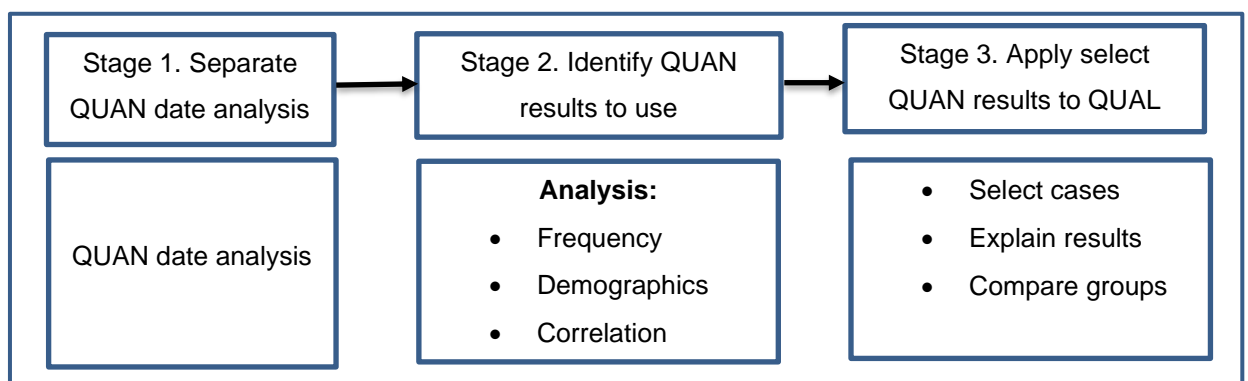


Figure 3.4 Visual Model for Explanatory Sequential Data Analysis

Adapted from Creswell and Clark (p.143)

Two primary sequential data collection phases are entailed in the sequential explanatory design and as such the sequential data analysis is aimed at informing of the second database from the first database (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The objective is to provide an answer to the mixed methods question.

The primary study question is: How does the qualitative data contributes towards the quantitative results' explanation? Particularly: How do the semi- structured interviews contribute towards understating and explanation of the quantitative results?

The significance of both data sets and study phases is highlighted with the proposed data analysis methodology. The quantitative and qualitative phases of the current

study showed coherence and supported each other with an intrinsic association to the study.

3.9.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative study phase was followed by quantitative data analysis. The study involved individual scoring of the quantitative data from the questionnaire instrument with the use of appropriate scoring tool.

The means and standard deviation (SD) tools are used to describe numerical data. Percentages were used to describe categorical variables. All the data was presented in a descriptive report. The use of Pearson's correlation coefficients, Analysis of Variance, and independent t-tests were employed to draw comparisons between demographic and the interrelations across all other variables. All the participants' data (N=393) were included in these analyses.

3.9.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

In study two, the researcher adopted the thematic analysis approach as the primary method for qualitative interview data analysis. Thematic analysis was defined earlier as the process of identifying and analysing patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The reporting of the findings is supported by the transition from description to analysis and to interpretation of the data. This approach allowed for the identification and analysis of patterns or themes within data.

Additionally, thematic analysis is designed to highlight meaning, understanding, and personal experiences, which aligns with the interrelation studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Moreover, the elements of pragmatic framework suitability, flexibility, usability ease, academic acceptance (organisational studies), social and psychological data interpretation, rich data sets description, and similarities and differences insight across data sets underpins the thematic analysis choice for the current research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For these reasons, thematic analysis was chosen over other analytical methods.

Figure 3.5 illustrated the six phases of thematic analysis as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). The researcher began by reading data and reading this data repeatedly, followed by coding, searching and reviewing themes, then providing definitions, and finally naming the themes, with the aim to generate a report of the analysis. The researcher produced visual map for each theme which included the following:

- **First-level statements**, which are descriptive and emerged from the raw data. These summary statements are provided by participants and establish the starting point of the data analysis process.
- Coding second-level **sub-themes** that cluster the first order themes described by the participants. These represent the conceptual dimensions of the key constructs discussed (e.g. self-interests- as dimension of participants' perceptions of organisational politics) and were derived by analysing and synthesising the first-order themes.
- Third-level **main themes** corresponding to the key constructs discussed in this thesis (e.g. perceptions of organisational politics, political skill); compared to theoretical categories, these dimensions convey an increased level of synthesis and abstraction in the data analysis process.

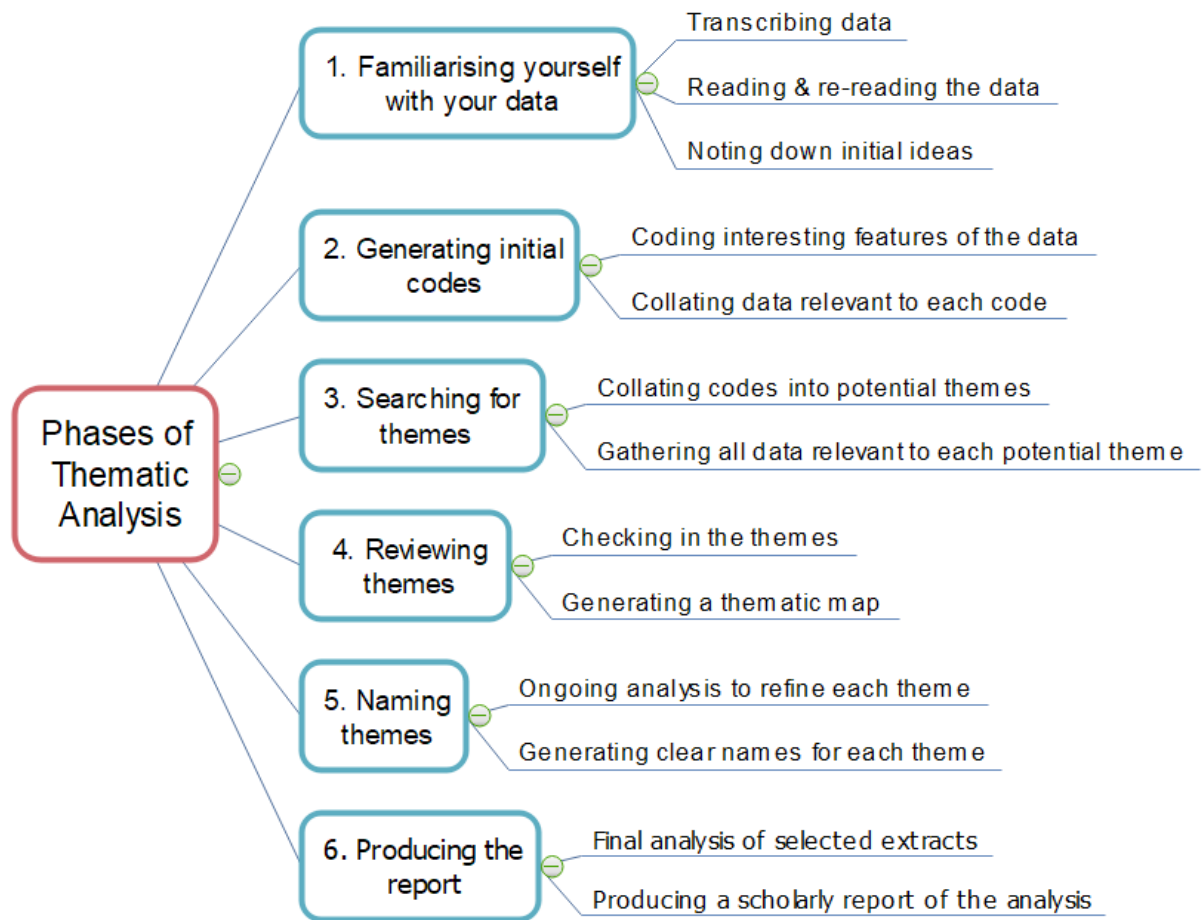


Figure 3.5 Phases of Thematic Analysis

Adapted from Braun & Clarke, 2006, p 87.

3.9.3 Integration of the data

Specifically, the 'mixed methods' term is used to refer to the entire spectrum of processes that are utilised in the collection, analysis and presentation of quantitative and qualitative data with reference to a single study (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). The mixed methods design analysis takes into account separate analysis of quantitative as well as qualitative findings with the use of suitable analytical techniques, which is followed by 'mixing' the data.

These outcomes or conclusions that are also referred to as inferences are obtained equally from the qualitative as well as quantitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The last data integration steps are most often poorly addressed or neglected in the majority of mixed methods studies and this trend has been observed gradually since

the mixed methods design introduction (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The current research entailed separated analysis and subsequent merging of data, which appropriately were factored in this explanatory mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011).

The quantitative data collected in Study One served as an academic platform to support the qualitative study section and helped to navigate the qualitative stage and also qualitative stage conversely provided the quantitative stage's numerical data explanation.

3.9.4 Computer Software

IBM SPSS Version 23, Microsoft Excel 2016, Microsoft Word 2016, and EndNote X9 software were used to enter, manage, analyse and present the findings of this research.

The benefits of design flexibility and functions and features underpinned the choice of this software program.

3.10 Ethical Issues

All research aspects have ethical implications according to Northway (2002). Flick (2014), considers ethical issues very significant in research, particularly in social sciences. He commended that researchers should be in compliance with laid down codes of ethics regulating and managing the researcher and the research relationships for the prevention of any direct or indirect adversity to participants. Additionally, it highlights the consideration of safeguarding procedures for participants excessively.

Josselson, Lieblich, and McAdams (2007), state the requirement of inclusion of dignity, privacy and well-being of study participants during data collection, analysis and reporting in interpersonal ethics. Eight basic principles have been proposed by Schnell and Heinritz cited in Flick (2014):

- a) Justification about the basic necessity of the research subject by the researchers;
- b) Clear explanation about the research aim and the circumstances requiring subject participation;

- c) Explanation of the methodological procedures by the researchers as utilised in the study;
- d) Ethically relevant negative or positive outcomes for the participants should be examined by researchers in relation to the research acts;
- e) Assessment by the researchers of potential damages and violations as a fallout of the project – prior to project commencement;
- f) Steps should be taken by researchers for identified violations and damages;
- g) As regards research usefulness no false statements should be made by the researchers;
- h) The current data protection regulations should be adhered to by the researchers (see Flick, 2014, pp. 49-50).

The University of Salford permits no exceptions to the codes of ethics, which mandate informed consent to underpin the research procedures along with the necessary permissions and obtaining voluntary informed consent by the participants. These should be done as a norm, prior to the research. The principles of free participation consent, safekeeping of confidential material, safeguarding participants from associated harm constitute the ethical practice and ethical codes. In alignment, the informed consent and permissions from the participants were obtained by the researcher.

3.10.1 Informed Consent

Informed consent is a prerequisite for subjects' participation in research study. It is defined as the circumstance wherein; the study subjects are aware of the research participation associated risks and benefits. Concurrently they should imperatively understand the voluntary nature of participation (Flynn & Goldsmith, 2013, p. 10).

This mandates appropriation of necessary measures by the researcher in the process of informed consent with necessary permissions to ensure a critical compliance of the Ethics Committee of the University of Salford requirements. The following criteria underpin the informed consent construct, according to Rossman and Rallis (cited in Walker-Gleaves, 2009; Allmark, 2002):

- a. The according of the consent should be based on individual competency;
- b. The research objectives should be transparent to the research community and the audience;
- c. The individual consent should be informed with complete understanding of study participation;
- d. The consent should be of purely voluntary nature;
- e. The participant should be able to withdraw without any adverse consequence or penalty and he/she should be aware of this right.

Thus, the data collection tools and questions employed in this research were developed by the primary researcher in consideration of all these principles. On presentation, the Ethics Committee appraised and accepted the survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews procedures (Presented in Appendix A). The study involved four companies and permission was obtained from each prior to data collection.

The current research aims and the procedures to be used were informed to the HR managers, specifically in relation to methods for data collection, sampling and management. The managers were appraised of the study sample target group and their selection as study participants to obtain relevant data.

With the voluntary participation and informed consent clarity, the participants agreed to share the relevant information for all research purposes. During interview, the voluntary participation nature of the interview was reiterated, with study purpose, and assurances of confidentiality.

3.10.2 Assurance of Confidentiality and Anonymity

It is crucial to ensure anonymity of participants and data confidentiality in any research. It is imperative to ensure privacy and concealment of participants' identity through encryption of personal details such as registered numbers, names, and locations (Flick, 2014; Flynn, Goldsmith, & Kim, 2013; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The

participants should be assured of sole and exclusive research-based use of the data collected as consented by them and external readers would be limited for identifying their participation from the study report. All these conditions and requirements were adequately accounted for and considered in the survey data collection measurements by the primary researcher and adhered to in the interview procedures employed in the study. The confidentiality of data and participants' identity were completely assured in the study and the primary researcher ensured maximum participant confidentiality, specifically as the study warranted the collection of employees' professional details.

Some background information was collected from the participants as the study methodology involved quantitative as well as qualitative data collection methods. Moreover, descriptive interview data were also collected with a verbatim quoting of the participants' responses in the study report.

As Josselson et al. (2007) states, "unless our participants trust that we will insure their anonymity, they would not tell us what they tell us" (p. 541).

The research faces the risk of potential study subject exposure as the study interview includes few subjects; therefore, in addition to managing collected data with sensitivity, at each progressive stage the study was discussed with great caution.

The primary researcher ensured that personal data like names and locations were anonymized and that all the data was appropriately stored through password protection of transcribed word documents and concealing employees' code. At the personal office of the researcher, all interview data, notes, writings and recordings were kept secure.

3.10.3 Gaining Access and Entry

Research has been considered as an intervention into a social system, which is most often viewed to be detrimental to the system under study, due to its defensive reaction to it. Flick (2014) states that between the social systems or organisation under study and the researcher, there exists a mutual unreceptiveness which is not even reduced by the expansive information exchange produced on commencement of research. Rather, "it leads to increasing complexity in the process of agreement and may lead to increased immune reactions" (p. 160) through the generation of

myths by both the parties through data exchange and/or by the researcher and participant relationship. It often happens that research is considered as an intrusion into the study field and it is perceived as a disturbance in the organisation's routine that seemingly does not extend any immediate as well as long term benefits, particularly for an external researcher to the organisation (Flick, 2014; Josselson, 2007). The disturbance to the institutions by a research study can be summed in the following three ways, according to Professor Flick:

- a. Disclosure of limitations of organisational activities;
- b. Lack of clarity on ulterior research motives by the organisation;
- c. Lack of concrete grounds for research participation refusal (2014, p. 160).

The researcher can be critically disadvantaged with these fears and thus it is imperative to establish, reciprocate and maintain rapport, credibility and professional reputation with gatekeepers and participants.

Correspondingly, the researcher's professional background (HR Manager) in addition to his network in the oil and gas sector facilitated his approach and entry to the study subject companies.

The participation agreement and acceptance of the companies can be attributed to the existing liaisons of the primary researcher with CEOs and directors of the OGS companies considered in the study. Their support in the first phase during the survey data collection was expected to continue to the second phase of the study.

Since the entry of the researcher into the organisations did not ensure access to all the participants, a mixed methods research studies like the current study was faced by some access challenges. The participants could present themselves with an unwillingness to talk, share or disclose relevant information as required by the researcher herein, the primary researcher aimed to depend on the cordial working relations and rapport with the companies' management, with assured prospects to select study participants and secure locations for conducting interviews successfully.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter illustrated the current study methodology and research design. The current study adopted the research onion design developed by Saunders et al. (2018) to present an overview of the current study methodological framework. The framework layers consist of: philosophy, approach, methodological choice, strategies, time horizon, and techniques and procedures. The researcher also adopted Creswell and Clark (2007) design to conduct explanatory sequential design in mixed methods research.

To conduct the current study, the researcher followed the pragmatist philosophy; used the abductive approach; employed mixed methods; used survey and thematic analysis strategies which by means of questionnaires and interviews which took place at a specific point in time.

Indeed, the employment of explanatory sequential design through amalgamating quantitative and qualitative methods was valuable because it allowed the researcher a method designed to garner quantitative and qualitative data and to use them to complement each other.

In the first study, the quantitative data was collected through questionnaire to measure the level of individual perceptions of study factors and also to assess the relationship among these factors. Moreover, the study utilised semi-structured interviews to explore participants' views based on their day-to-day work experiences. The data gained from these interviews was used to complement the quantitative findings.

The population of the current research included all employees who work in the OGS in Oman. Moreover, Study One applied the probability sampling method represented by the stratified sampling technique, while purposive sampling was used in study two. The current study has undertaken a range of statistical analyses, for example, comparison of the mean scores and standard deviation, independent-sample t-tests, and ANOVA test, while in study two, the researcher used coding technique to extract themes.

The findings of Study One and study two are explained and discussed in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR: STUDY ONE FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

Study One assessed the interrelation across the research variables using quantitative approach. Chapter Four begins with pilot study outcomes, followed by Study One's findings., Chapter Four analyses demographic information, respondents' perceptions toward leadership styles and organisational politics, followed by hypotheses examination. Finally, the researcher identifies the important themes resulted from Study On, which will be explored further in Study Two.

4.2 The Findings of Pilot Study

4.2.1 Introduction and Justification of Pilot Study

During a research project, unforeseen problems may arise requiring alterations in the study protocol. According to Polit et al. (2001) a small-scale trial should be conducted by the researcher prior to the main study with the objective of identifying issues and concerns relevant to study's feasibility and methodology. As corroborated by Johanson and Brooks (2010), the pilot study is aimed at identifying the items performance, internal consistency estimation, response behaviour estimation to specific options. Additionally, the pilot study allowed the researcher to test the clarity of the questionnaire questions and also to modify the research design and procedure before the main study (McBurney & White, 2009). After the pilot study, researcher identified several issues related to the understanding of the Arabic version scales, so changes were made to increase the reliability and validity of scales. Pilot study commenced in May 2017 and finished in one-month time.

4.2.2 Process and Procedures

The researcher created the questionnaire and the questionnaire guide before carrying out the pilot study and submitted them as part of the ethics application.

In the beginning of May 2017, the researcher received the ethical approval from the ethical committee, and immediately contacted one of the companies looking for few participants to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was uploaded in Survey Monkey website to allow the participants to complete the questionnaire online. The voluntary nature of participation was made clear to the participants who indicated their consent to participate by clicking on a link provided in the online survey. The use of email was employed to recruit twelve working professionals as the preliminary instrument assessment was the primary goal of the pilot study. The participants were heterogenous in terms of age, gender, and from different organisational levels.

The final concluded number for the pilot study was in alignment with the recommendation of scholars; 10-30 participants have been specifically suggested by Isaac and Michael (1995) and up to 12 participants by Van Belle (2011). The questionnaire started with questions covering basic demographic information followed by specific questions of interest. The survey questions were tailored towards answering the first research questions in a way that ensured the data collected was beneficial and measured all variables included in this study. Below is an outline of the topic areas covered during the study:

- 1) Demographic Information
- 2) Transformational Leadership Style
- 3) Transactional Leadership Style
- 4) Passive/Avoidant Leadership Style
- 5) Leaders' Political Skill
- 6) Perceptions of Organisational Politics
- 7) In-Role Performance
- 8) Organisational Citizenship Behaviours-Individual
- 9) Organisational Citizenship Behaviours-Individual

A 5-point Likert scale was adapted to record the scale response, i.e. 1 (Strongly Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Agree). Noteworthy is the fact that the pilot study was made available in two languages i.e. Arabic and English which allowed respondents to opt for their preferred language by having two separate links which were sent to the participants. The contents of both versions were exactly similar.

4.2.3 Findings of the pilot study

4.2.3.1 Internal Consistency

One of most important objectives of the pilot study was to check the reliability of the questionnaire scales (Hair et al., 2012). The Cronbach's alphas for the transformational leadership (20 items) and passive/avoidant leadership styles (8 items) were .93 and .94, respectively. The transactional leadership scale was lower (8 items; $\alpha = .78$). The Cronbach's alphas for the perception of organisational politics (6 items) and leaders' political skill (18 items) were .93 and .95, respectively. The last research variable is employee performance, measuring three subscales: in-role performance (7 items; $\alpha = .91$), OCB-I (7 items; $\alpha = .89$), and OCB-O (7 items; $\alpha = .88$). Overall, these figures jointly have shown that all scales are of good internal consistency and appropriate for further analysis (Hair et al., 2012).

4.2.3.2 Questionnaire Items

Based on the Cronbach's alphas results, the researcher conducted further analysis using IBM SPSS v23 to diagnose the particular questions which were affecting the internal consistency. Based on the analysis, six questions (two in transactional leadership scale, two in in-role performance scale, and two in OCB-O) were re-translated to improve Cronbach's alphas.

The feedback gathered from pilot survey participants provided information that allowed the researcher to better translate questions for the study survey.

Also, some respondents felt that the introduction and the demographic questions were very long and should be reduced. Apart from that, the majority of respondents thought that the question items were lucid and meaningful.

4.2.3.3 Questionnaire Length

Prior study indicates that the length of the questionnaire affects the mood of the respondents (Lindell & Whitney, 2001); for instance, When the respondents feel questionnaire long and repetitive, they are likely to suffer from fatigue and boredom.

Therefore, employing the questionnaire and keeping it short and interesting as possible whilst using an adequate number of items to measure each construct was one of the main challenges. The researcher performed several pre-test exercises and a pilot study to check the required time for completion. During the pilot study, the researcher requested that the participants should record and provide feedback of the required time to complete the questionnaire and answer all questions. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire was 15-20 minutes and all respondents confirmed that they spent less than 18 minutes to answer all the questions in the survey.

4.2.3.4 Pilot Study - Data Collection Method

Pilot study revealed that the employed method of data collection, a survey-questionnaire was appropriate for the research because online survey allowed researcher to reach twelve of the employees with various characteristics in a short amount of time, despite being separated by great geographical distance between United Kingdom and Oman. Moreover, the online survey provider supplied survey design assistance to extract, analyse and interpret data (Taylor, 1999; Wright, 2005). Last but not least, online survey allowed the researcher to work on the other parts of the research study as suggested by Andrews, Nonnecke, and Preece (2003) while the respondents complete the questionnaire.

4.2.3.5 Summary of the Pilot Study

The pilot study contributed in assessing the measurement of items of the designated constructs and whether reasonable correlation was evident within single construct items towards the establishment of the internal consistency's preliminary judgment. The information collected during the pilot study provided valuable feedback and helped to reduce errors and misunderstanding in questionnaires. Additionally, two questions in demographic section were based on the participants' feedback. The two questions were asking about the work location and employment status. The information ultimately contributed to the enhancement of questionnaire reliability and validity (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

4.3 Findings of Study One

Once the pilot study had been performed, which was followed by the essential modifications, the final questionnaire was then uploaded on Survey Monkey to gather data. A link to the survey was circulated to all employees in the four companies through the assistance of local Human Resource Departments. The final data collection was conducted over one month, and the total number of respondents was 414 employees. The data was extracted in Excel format and then export it to IBM SPSS 23 for further analysis. In the following sub-sections, the preliminary data analysis including data cleaning, missing value, and test of normality are explained.

4.3.1 Data Cleaning

The researcher received 414 responses to the questionnaire surveys from four companies. To ensure the accuracy rate, an error message was set (i.e. if respondents miss any question), they received a reminder to answer all questions and could not submit the questionnaire online unless all questions were completed. 21 of 414 questionnaires received were invalid (e.g. answering 1 for all questions) and therefore were removed for further analysis. In total, 393 respondents were reminded for further data screening procedures.

4.3.2 Completion Rate

The completion rate, also called the response rate, is the percentage of employees who respond to a questionnaire. Indeed, high completion rates provides better results and more representative of the target population (Punch, 2003). To calculate the response rate, the researcher used the formula suggested by Bryman (2015) as follow:

$$\frac{\text{number of usable questionnaires}}{\text{total sample} - \text{unsuitable or uncountable members of the sample}} \times 100$$

Table 4.1 provided a summary of response rate per company and per sector. While the response rate in companies A and B individually was lower than for companies C or D, the main focus in this study was to treat them as three divisions namely upstream, midstream and downstream. Therefore, since both A & B belong

to the same division, the response rate as an upstream division was 30% which was close to other sectors. The overall average response rate in this study was 31%. That was consistent with the commonly accepted completion rate which varied between 10% to 50% in the survey study (Cohen et al., 2013).

Table 4.1 *Response Rate*

Category	Upstream		Midstream	Downstream	Total
Company	A	B	C	D	
Total Employees	163	197	407	487	1253
Total Responses	47	65	140	162	414
Unusable	2	1	8	10	21
Usable	45	64	132	152	393
Response Rate Per Company	28%	33%	32%	31%	32%
Response Rate Per Sector	30%		32%	31%	31%

4.3.3 Demographic Information

As indicated in Table 4.2, 393 was the total sample size. The majority of respondents were male (251 respondents), forming about 64% of the sample size, compared to female respondents (142 female participants), which represented 36% of the study sample.

A perceptible low response rate of female participants and disproportional distribution between the two sexes can be obviously seen in the sample. The justification for low representation rate of female employees in the study is due to the unequal distribution rate of female employees working in the private sector. Based on the Public Authority of Social Insurance Annual Report (2016), there were 161,529 male employees, representing 75% of the private sector workforce, compared with 53,029 female employees, representing 25%.

It is worth stating that the Omani government has made significant effort in expanding women's opportunities in the workforce and ensure their participation at all organisational levels and as a result female participation in the workforce has

increased during the last decade. More specifically, those efforts resulted in a spectacular increase in the percentage of females working in the private sector over the last ten years, from 17% in 2006 to 25% in 2016 (Public Authority of Social Insurance, 2016).

Furthermore, Table 4.2 shows that the largest employees' age group was the category (28–37 years), which represented 40% of the total sample while the category (18-27) was the smallest category in the sample size. The majority of the sample was between the age of 28 and 47 years old, (65% of the total sample size).

Table 4.2 *Gender and Age Characteristics*

Age	Male	Female	Total
18-27	44	16	60
28-37	105	53	158
38-47	63	34	97
48+	39	39	78
Total	251	142	393

Table 4.3 illustrates the type of qualifications and the number of employees/ leaders in each qualification level. According to Ministry of Higher Education in Oman, there are seven qualification levels namely Primary, Intermediate, Secondary, Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and Doctoral Degree. In the current study sample, more than 95% of respondents had acquired associate degree or higher. The reasons for that, is that several oil and gas companies in Oman have included education assistance scheme as part of the reward system whereby the company pays the full tuition fees if employee accepts to stay in the company for a certain number of years. Additionally, the vast majority have changed their staffing strategy and focused on recruiting the core technical and support jobs which require degrees and to outsource low level jobs. As a result, the qualification level has been become a crucial criteria in recruitment.

Table 4.3 *Job levels and Qualification Levels Characteristics*

	Employee	Leader	Total
Primary Certificate	2	0	2
Intermediate Certificate	4	0	4
Secondary Certificate	7	4	11
Associate Degree	10	7	17
Bachelor's Degree	169	131	300
Master's Degree	5	29	34
Doctoral Degree	12	13	25
Total	209	184	393

4.3.4 The Respondents' Perceptions towards Transformational Leadership

One of the research objectives was to understand the perceptions of respondents regarding the transformational leadership style. Table 4.4 provides an overview of the means and standard deviations of respondents' scores for all 'Full Range of Leadership Model' variables namely transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, and passive avoidance style.

The cut-off point to determine whether the leader demonstrated the styles of the Full Range of Leadership model was "3". The level of "3" or greater was selected because it indicated whether the leader at least "sometimes" was demonstrating the Full Range of Leadership style on the Likert-scale questionnaire, whereas, the level of "2" was graded as the leader demonstrating the relevant style "Once in a while", and this was considered not to be an adequate level for a leader to be categorised, for instance, as a transformational leader (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Furthermore, Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2001) suggested that the individuals who had the composite score of transformational leadership should be greater than the average score for all the respondents exhibiting the transformational leadership style.

Correspondingly, the transactional and passive/avoidant leadership styles were measured by applying the same principles.

Table 4.4 shows that, transformational leadership style ($M = 3.20$; $SD = .84$) and transactional leadership style ($M = 3.14$; $SD = .70$) were practiced more than passive/avoidant leadership style. Obviously, the passive/avoidant leadership mean was below the score of “3”, which indicated that the passive/avoidant style was exercised infrequently.

Based on the analysis, the leaders were perceived to be demonstrating transformational leadership style as shown by the high means scores reported across the various 20 items that were tested. Specifically, the leaders were perceived to have idealised influence, generally trustworthy in their words and actions and aspiring to perform and to inspire the followers towards a shared vision.

Although participants believed that transformational leadership was practiced in Oman, top-down and transactional styles were still common at work. Alterations to leadership styles would need to be made with respect to the context of the local culture.

Table 4.4 *Descriptive summary of Participants’ Perceptions toward FRLM*

Full Range of Leadership Styles	M	SD
1. Transformational Leadership (TFL)	3.20	.84
2. Transactional Leadership (TRL)	3.14	.70
3. Passive/Avoidant Leadership (PAL)	2.41	.90

Additionally, the independent-samples t-test technique was used to compare the mean scores of the difference between leaders and employees’ perceptions of transformational, transactional leadership styles, and passive avoidance leadership. The results of the independent-sample t-test are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 illustrates presentation of t-test results with unequal variances employing the Satterthwaite approximation for degrees of freedom. This is the most common adjustment used in statistical software and the adjustment found in SPSS.

Based on the t-test results, scores show that the mean of the perceptions towards transformational leadership differed between employees ($M = 3.28$, $SD = .74$) and

leaders ($M = 3.04$, $SD = .93$) at the level of significance ($t = 2.79$, $df = 348$). Furthermore, Cohen's effect size value ($d = .28$) suggested a modest practical significance.

Similarly, the results reveal that there is a significance between employees' perception ($M = 3.22$, $SD = .62$) and leaders' perception ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .77$) towards transactional leadership ($t = 2.23$, $df = 350$). Furthermore, Cohen's effect size value ($d = .22$) suggested a modest practical significance.

For passive/avoidant leadership, the results show that both targeted groups believed that leaders rarely practised the passive/avoidant leadership style. However, the results show no differences in the scores between employees and leaders' perceptions toward passive/avoidant leadership.

Accordingly, it can be concluded that, based on the respondents' perceptions, leaders in the oil and gas sector in Oman are more likely to exhibit transformational leadership behaviours and transactional leadership behaviours than passive/avoidant leadership. There is also a difference between employees' perceptions and leaders' perceptions towards transformational and transactional leadership style. On average employees tend to have higher perceptions towards transformational and transactional leadership than leaders.

Although, the findings are in line with several studies conducted in the West (Nguni et al., 2006; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007), they do provide different outcomes compared to the study conducted in the public sector in United Arab Emirates (Litz & Scott, 2017) which found that leaders perceived transformational leadership is exhibited higher than the employees perceptions. Also, Study One findings indicate different results compared the study conducted in the public sector in Oman (Analoui, Ahmed, & Kakabadse, 2010) which found transactional leadership was practiced more than transformational leadership.

The difference might be first, due to the difference between the nature of public and private sectors and second the differences between Education sector and Oil and Gas sector. Additionally, the aforementioned studies used different scales to measure transformational and transactional leadership than FRLM.

Table 4.5 *T-test results of Leaders and Employees Perceptions toward FRLM*

Full Range of Leadership Styles	Employees			Leaders			95% CI for		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Mean Difference			
TFL	209	3.28	.74	184	3.04	.93	.07, .41		2.79*	348
TRL	209	3.22	.62	184	3.06	.77	.01, .30		2.23*	350
PAL	209	2.40	.82	184	2.43	.98	-.21, .14		-.35	358

Note: TFL= Transformational Leadership, TRL= Transactional Leadership, PAL= Passive/Avoidant Leadership

* $p < .05$.

The above results also support Bass's concept of transformational leadership, transformational leadership is a global style and can be found in various types of organisations. As Northouse (2018) demonstrated, transformational leadership is the most popular leadership theory practiced and used in the literature. In addition, the results are in line with previous studies (AlKindy et al., 2016; Mujtaba et al., 2010). However, the mean score of responses to transformational leadership styles were higher when compared to previous studies conducted in the public sector in Oman. This may be due to the differences in the working context and the job nature of each sector. Additionally, based on the demographic information, more than 95% of respondents reported they had at least associate degree or higher while only 57.5% of other study participants had a diploma or more. It is possible, as demonstrated by the other studies (Bass & Bass, 2009), that employees with higher levels of education have a better perception about leadership behaviour than those with lower educational levels.

The implication of the perception that leaders employed transformational styles is that creativity, self-motivation and development were imperative for the leaders in the oil and gas sector.

Although gender and age were not within the scope of this study, the researcher tested the correlations of both variables to discover whether their perceptions differed significantly towards transformational leadership.

Several studies conducted in the west have shown that there are gender and age differences existing in the employees' perception of exerting the transformational leadership (Van Engen & Willemssen, 2004). Nevertheless, in this research, both gender and age did not vary significantly in respect of their perceptions of transformational leadership. Similar findings were also demonstrated by several studies conducted in various Arabic countries (Aboshaiqah, Hamdan-Mansour, Sherrod, Alkhaibary, & Alkhaibary, 2014).

4.3.5 The Respondents' Perceptions towards Organisational Politics

The second objective of this research was to test employees' perceptions of organisational politics (POP) and leaders' political skill (LPS). The researcher begins with POP findings followed by LPS findings.

4.3.5.1 The Perceptions of Organisational Politics (POP)

In Table 4.6, data demonstrates that employees perceive organisational politics as having the highest average rating above the mid-point of 3 on the five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) with a mean of 3.27 and a standard deviation of .97.

Table 4.6 *Descriptive Summary of Participants' Perceptions of the OP*

Oil and Gas Sector	M	SD
Upstream	3.01	.96
Midstream	3.36	.94
Downstream	3.39	0.97
Overall	3.27	.97

Additionally, a one-way analysis of variance was performed to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences across the means of three divisions which are upstream, midstream, downstream on employees' perceptions towards POP. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was evaluated by using Levene's test which indicated that the variances in the groups were equal.

There was a significant difference in mean of perceptions towards organisational politics among the three divisions, $F(2,390) = 5.84$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .030$ (see Table 4.7). Because of the differences in sample size, the researcher used the Gabriel's test in post-hoc comparisons. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between upstream and the midstream ($p = .01$). Additionally, there was a significant difference between upstream and the downstream, ($p < .001$). However, the midstream did not significantly differ from downstream sector, ($p = .99$).

Table 4.7 *One-Way Analysis of Variance of POP in OGS*

	<i>Df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	2	10.81	5.40	5.84	.003
Within Groups	390	360.60	.92		
Total	392	371.42			

Next, the researcher used t- tests to determine if there was a significant difference between the means of two groups (gender and job level), towards POP. Several studies conducted in the west have shown that there are some differences existing in the employees' perception of exerting the organisational politics (Ferris et al., 2002; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Nevertheless, in this study, gender and job level did not vary significantly in their perceptions of organisational politics. Similar findings were also demonstrated by another study conducted in Israel (Vigoda, 2000).

4.3.5.2 Leader's Political Skill

The second construct in organisational politics is leader's political skill. Although, table 4.8 demonstrated that, upstream scored higher mean ($M = 3.26$, $SD = .69$) compared to midstream and downstream ($M = 3.14$, $SD = .74$; $M = 3.07$, $SD = .78$) respectively. One- way ANOVA test indicated that there was no significance difference among them (see Table 4.9).

Table 4.8 *Descriptive Summary of Participants' Perceptions toward LPS*

Oil and Gas Sector	M	SD
Upstream	3.27	.65
Midstream	3.14	.73
Downstream	3.07	.73
Overall	3.15	.71

Interestingly, there was a significant difference between employees' view and leaders' view toward leader's political skill as depicted in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 *Respondents' Perceptions toward LPS*

	Employees			Leaders			95% CI for		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Mean Difference			
LPS	209	3.22	.76	184	3.06	.64	.01, .29		2.17*	389

* $p < .05$.

Based on the t-test result for independent samples, results demonstrated that employees' perceptions ($M = 3.22$, $SD = .76$) towards leader's political skill were found to be higher than leaders' perceptions towards leaders' political skill ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .64$), ($t(390) = 2.17$, $p = .03$, $d = .22$).

The high level of leader's political skill is attributable to different factors as per the literature. Specifically, several scholars believed several components of political skill shared similar meanings with transformational leadership components (i.e. charisma), hence an increase in transformational leadership style means an increase in political skill (Coole, 2007). As such, politically skilled leaders mix social astuteness with the ability to alter their behaviour to different and changing situational demands in a manner that seems to be sincere, stimulates support and trust, and effectively influences the responses of others.

4.3.6 The Respondents' Perceptions towards Employees' Performance

From employees' point of view of their performance, Table 4.10 demonstrated that the mean and standard deviation scores concerning the three levels of employees' performance namely IRP, OCB-I, and OCB-O in upstream, midstream, and downstream.

According to the data presented, employees on average perceived themselves as high performers and above the mid-point of 3 in all forms of performance.

Table 4.10 *Respondents' Perceptions toward Employees' Performance*

	n	IRP		OCB-I		OCB- O	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Upstream	109	4.01	.75	3.48	.88	3.68	.94
Midstream	132	3.84	.91	3.34	1.02	3.58	.96
Downstream	152	3.92	.91	3.46	.97	3.83	.83
Overall	393	3.92	.87	3.43	.97	3.70	.91

4.3.7 Hypotheses Testing

In Table 4.11 Pearson product moment correlations were calculated to assess the relationships among study variables. First, there was a positive correlation between transformational leadership and transactional leadership ($r = .20$; $p < .01$), which corresponds with the theory in the literature (i.e. Bass, 2009; Nguni et al., 2006). Second, transformational leadership is positively correlated with in-role performance, $r = .42$, OCB-I, $r = .48$, and OCB-O, $r = .45$ (all $p_s < .01$). However,

transformational leadership was negatively correlated with the perceptions of organisational politics ($r = -.46$; $p < .01$). These findings support H1 and H5.

Table 4.11 Correlations table of research variables (N= 393)

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. TFL	3.2	.84	.93							
2. TRL	3.14	.70	.76	.20**						
3. PAL	2.41	.90	.88	-.42**	-.31**					
4. LPS	3.15	.71	.92	.46**	.23**	-.41**				
5. POP	3.27	.97	.91	-.46**	.26**	.30**	-.20**			
6. IRP	3.92	.87	.93	.42**	.45**	-.45**	.32**	-.13*		
7. OCB- I	3.43	.97	.90	.48**	.31**	-.45**	.33**	-.20**	.78***	
8. OCB- O	3.70	.91	.89	.45**	.20**	-.31**	.23**	-.24**	.70***	.76***

Notes: TFL = Transformational Leadership; TRL = Transactional Leadership; PAL = Passive Avoidance Leadership; LPS = Leader's Political Skill; POP = Perception of Organisational Politics; IRP = In-role Performance; OCB-I = Organisational Citizenship Behaviour- Individual; OCB-O = Organisational Citizenship Behaviour – Organisation.

Internal consistency is presented in Cronbach alpha (α).

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Moving to transactional leadership, there was a positive correlation between transactional leadership and the three forms of employees' performance namely, IRP ($r = .45$; $p < .01$), OCB-I, ($r = .31$; $p < .01$), and OCB-O, ($r = .20$; $p < .01$). Transactional leadership also correlated positively with the perceptions of organisational politics ($r = .26$; $p < .01$). These findings are in line with H2 and H4 respectively.

Table 4.11 additionally, demonstrates the relationship between the organisational politics variables and the three forms of employees' performance. As expected, the perception of organisational politics was negatively correlated within-role performance, $r = -.13$, OCB-I, $r = -.20$, and OCB-O, $r = -.24$ (all $p_s < .01$), supporting H7. On the contrary, leader's political skill was correlated positively with in-role performance, $r = .32$, OCB-I, $r = .33$, and OCB-O, $r = .23$ (all $p_s < .01$), supporting H8.

Moreover, the researcher tested the relationship across the three forms of employees' performance and the results indicated that, in-role performance was significantly related to OCB-I, ($r = .78, p < .001$) and OCB-O, ($r = .70, p < .001$). Similarly, there was a significant correlation between OCB-I and OCB-O, ($r = .76, p < .001$).

Despite the high association among the three forms of employees' performance that is, after all, not exceptional (see, for example, the .67 correlation found by Vigoda-Gadot, 2007 or the .77 correlation found by Wang et al., 2005).

Last but not least, the researcher conducted further analysis to test the correlations of the third style of leadership - the passive/avoidant style - with organisation politics and employee performance as illustrated in table 4.11.

The statistics demonstrated that, passive/avoidant leadership style had negative correlations with transformational leadership ($r = -.42; p < .01$), transactional leadership ($r = -.31; p < .05$), the leader's political skill ($r = -.41, p < .05$), in-role performance ($r = -.45, p < .05$), negative correlation with OCB-I ($r = -.45, p < .05$), and negative correlation with OCB-O ($r = -.31, p < .05$). On the other hand, there was a positive correlation between passive/avoidant leadership style and the perception of organisational politics ($r = .30, p < .05$).

4.4 Chapter Summary

Chapter Four has presented the findings of Study One. The first section discusses the outcomes of the pilot study. In the second section, the researcher presents the findings of the main study. The first part of the main study was focusing on the demographic information of the study's respondents. A larger proportion of the participants were male forming 64% whereas female represented 36% of the total sample. As for age, the results showed that the majority of respondents aged between 28 to 37 years. Additionally, 46% of the respondents held managerial position.

The first objective of this research was to assess the degree to which transformational leadership style is being perceived by employees in the OGS in Oman. The researcher used the Full Range of Leadership model suggested by Bass and Avolio (1991) which includes three styles (namely transformational leadership, transactional leadership and passive avoidance leadership).

The results demonstrated that employees perceived their leaders as displaying transformational leadership style more often than either transactional or passive/avoidant leadership.

Based on t-test results, there was a significant difference between employees' perceptions and leaders' perceptions towards transformational leadership and transactional leadership. Among the five dimensions of transformational leadership, Inspirational motivation scored the highest means, whereas Idealised influence (attributes) scored the lowest means. Respondents perceived their leaders to have high ability to inspire confidence, motivation and a sense of meaning in their work.

The second research objective assessed employees' perceptions towards organisational politics. Based on the research findings, the perception of organisational politics was rated above the means in the OGS in Oman, implying that employees perceive work environment as more of "self-interests". Although, based on Hofstede study, Oman was ranked as a "collective society" which means individuals orient their action for the group benefits rather than individual benefits, but this finding indicated the opposite.

For the leaders' political skill attributes, there was a significant difference between employees' view and leaders' view toward leader's political skill. Additionally, respondents rated apparent sincerity higher than other attributes as such behaviour was not considered by others to be manipulative or coercive and they appeared to others as trusted, sincere and confident.

Chapter Four also examined research hypotheses and the outcomes are summarised in Table 4.12. Study One has produced rich research findings. The findings revealed that there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employees' performance which are congruent with previous studies (Ghafoor et al., 2011; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007; Wang et al., 2011). Yet, Study One findings provided more details of the relationship among transformational leadership style and each aspect of employees' performance namely, IRP, OCB-I, and OCB-O.

The researcher additionally, tested the correlations across leadership styles and organisational politics. The findings uphold a negative relationship between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of organisational politics

whereas a positive relationship between transactional leadership and the perception of organisational politics.

This is supporting the idea that a transformational leader whose influence derives from his/her high levels of personal integrity can inculcate an environment of trust, involvement, satisfaction, and excellence in the organisation. On the other hand, a transactional leader whose influence derives from his/her position of authority to use rewards and punishments will succeed in his/her job in a more limited way (Hamstra et al., 2011).

The researcher also, tested the relationships between the perceptions of organisational politics and employees' performance. Based on the statistics, there is a negative relationship between the perception of organisational politics and all forms of employees' performance. Low levels of OCBs in private sector may damage its ability to provide better service to the government and citizens. That can be minimised by encouraging transformational leadership which may decrease the negative impact of organisational politics. Such leadership may raise employees' in-role and extra-role performance and hence also the output of company productions.

Table 4.12 *Summary of Hypotheses Testing*

Hypotheses	Results
Transformational leadership style is positively correlated with in-role performance (H1a), OCB-I (H1b), and OCB-O (H1c).	Supported
Transactional leadership style is positively correlated with in-role performance (H2a), OCB-I (H2b), and OCB-O (H2c).	Supported
Transformational leadership is more positively correlated with in-role performance (H3a), OCB-I (H3b), and OCB-O (H3c). [when compared to Transactional leadership style].	H3b and H3c Supported
Transactional leadership style is positively correlated with perception of organisational politics.	Supported

Transformational leadership style is negatively correlated with perception of organisational politics.	Supported
Transformational leadership style is more correlated with perception of leader's political skill. [When compared to transactional leadership style].	Supported
Perception of organisational politics is negatively correlated with in-role performance (H7a), OCB-I (H7b) and OCB-O (H7c).	Supported
Perception of leader's political skills is positively correlated with in-role performance (H8a), OCB-I (H8b) and OCB-O (H8c).	Supported

Study One provided several insights about the level of transformational leadership, organisational politics and the relationship across research variables. However, the details of employees' experience towards organisational politics and transformational leadership yet to be explored in Study Two. In Study Two, the researcher focuses on answering the following questions:

- How would employees describe their work experiences with organisational politics in the collective society?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of transformational leadership?

CHAPTER FIVE: STUDY TWO FINDINGS

5.1 Overview

This chapter presents findings of Study Two (qualitative study) providing an in-depth analysis of the fourth and fifth research objectives. The fourth research objective focuses on the employees' experience of organisational politics. Specifically, the emphasis will be on the employees and leaders' perceptions of the organisational politics and the importance of political skills for leaders.

While numerous individuals see the bright side of the transformational leadership only, there are also several leaders and employees who see a number of drawbacks in it. The fifth research objective will present the strengths and the weaknesses of implementing a transformational leadership style in the oil and gas sector in Oman.

In addition to that, as informed by the findings of Study One (Quantitative study), this chapter also explains the interrelation across leadership study and organisational politics. This will provide the opportunity to understand the quantitative data obtained from employees and leaders in the OGS in Oman in more detail.

This chapter begins with the demographic data of the participating employees and leaders, followed by the findings from the analysis of the interview data. A thematic analysis method was employed to analyse and report the data. Thematic analysis was defined earlier as the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The reporting of the findings is supported by the transition from description to analysis and to interpretation of the data.

The findings are divided into three main sections: participants' demographics, participants' experiences about organisational politics, and transformational leadership strengths and weaknesses.

5.2 Study Two Participants

The total number of the participants in Study Two was twenty-seven participants selected purposively. The main reason for selecting participants purposively was to focus on particular characteristics of a population, which enabled the researcher to answer the remaining research questions.

The participants were classified into three categories based on their seniority in the organisation. The interviews' duration varied between 35 minutes to 98 minutes with an average of 54 minutes.

An overview of the participants' demographics can be seen in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2. To maintain confidentiality, the participants are given a pseudonym and the remaining demographic information such as organisation name and the exact job title are not disclosed.

The twenty-seven participants consisted of twenty-one males and six females from geographically diverse sections throughout the oil and gas sector in Oman. Ten participants were selected from the upstream division, eight participants from midstream division, and nine participants from the downstream division.

Table 5.1 *Sample breakdown by Levels of Hierarchy and Gender*

	Employees	Entry- Level Leadership	Middle /Top Leadership	Total
Male	6	5	10	21
Female	3	1	2	6
Total	9	6	12	27

Table 5.2 *Sample break-down by Division and Levels of Hierarchy*

	Employees	Entry- Level Leadership	Middle /Top Leadership	Total
Upstream	3	2	5	10
Midstream	3	2	3	8
Downstream	3	2	4	9
Total	9	6	12	27

One of the icebreaker questions was about the number of years working experience in the OGS. Collectively these educational participants had over 300 years of experience in the oil and gas sector and 100 years of experience in leadership.

This indicates that participants were well acquainted with their organisational environment and could comment on it as related to the leadership style and politics.

Generally, leaders' participants started their leadership journeys began as junior employees followed by promotion to serve in various leadership roles in the OGS. Their working experiences ranged from 5-32 years of experience in leading oil and gas companies in Oman.

Since all of the participants had at least 5 years' work experience, they had the opportunity to understand their organisational environment and could comment on it as relevant to the leadership style and politics.

Furthermore, the participants' ages ranged from 27 years to 55 years with an average age of 38 years. Though age was to some extent relevant to levels of hierarchy in the organisation, both age and hierarchy did not completely overlap, provided that a number of the younger participants had higher leadership roles than older ones.

In addition to that and based on the literature review, a number of researchers stressed that levels of hierarchy, and not necessarily age, was vital in sharing views and experiences related to leadership and politics (Zacher, Rosing, & Frese, 2011). As such, there was no theoretical justification for delineating age throughout the findings, yet this section explains age to give the reader a comprehensive picture of the sample. Levels of hierarchy were classified according to participants' position title, grade, and supported by their personal explanation of their job. The grading ladder varied slightly in the four firms, and for confidentiality reasons, I clustered the participants into three levels of hierarchy: employees, emergent leaders (including supervisors, lead, team leaders) and middle or senior leaders (including department manager, director, executives).

There was a variety in terms of functional role, which meant the participants held roles in a breadth of sections such as Operations, Subsurface, Finance, Engineering, Human Resources, Administrations, Supply Chain and Information Technology.

For exemplification purposes, the following were examples of position titles among the participants interviewed: Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Deputy CEO, Human Resources Director, Head of Engineering, Operations Manager, Director of Corporate Affairs, Mechanical Technician, Accountant, Geologist, Project Engineer

and Chemical Process Engineer. Again, the above titles and functions were alluded to as a descriptor of the sample because the study did not intend to emphasise a specific function; subsequently the analysis and the discussion did not consider taking this into account.

Finally, yet importantly, in terms of educational level, three participants held PhD, ten participants held master's degree, twelve held bachelor's degree, and two of them held associate degree.

5.3 Organisational Politics

5.3.1 Participants' Definitions of Politics

Based on the literature, the definition of organisational politics is a contentious topic in the field of the organisational behaviour (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2016). Different viewpoints expressed by participants were reflective of Gerald and Darren (2011)'s claim that if you were to request somebody to clearly define organisational politics, most likely you would not get two alike or even close definitions. The interview answers indicated that definitions of organisational politics were usually diverse, sometimes inconsistent, hesitant, and difficult to articulate. For instance, one of the participants said

“it is one of those constructs which is difficult to define but, I can recognise it if I see it.”

Another participant commented, “...well, in my view, using the label ‘politics’ can be a bit of a barrier because people have mixed impressions and perceptions about it.”

The underlying philosophical assumptions of this study is that patterns of meaning observed across participants were indicative of their perceptions of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, in facilitating the expressions of these individually held meanings about organisational politics, the researcher paid close attention to emerging patterns in those definitions which described a commonality that can be considered as signifying participants' definition of organisational politics.

The researcher underlines in this section the main themes, which appear to approximate to a widely accepted definition of organisational politics among the interviewed participants (see Table 5.3, and Figure 5.1).

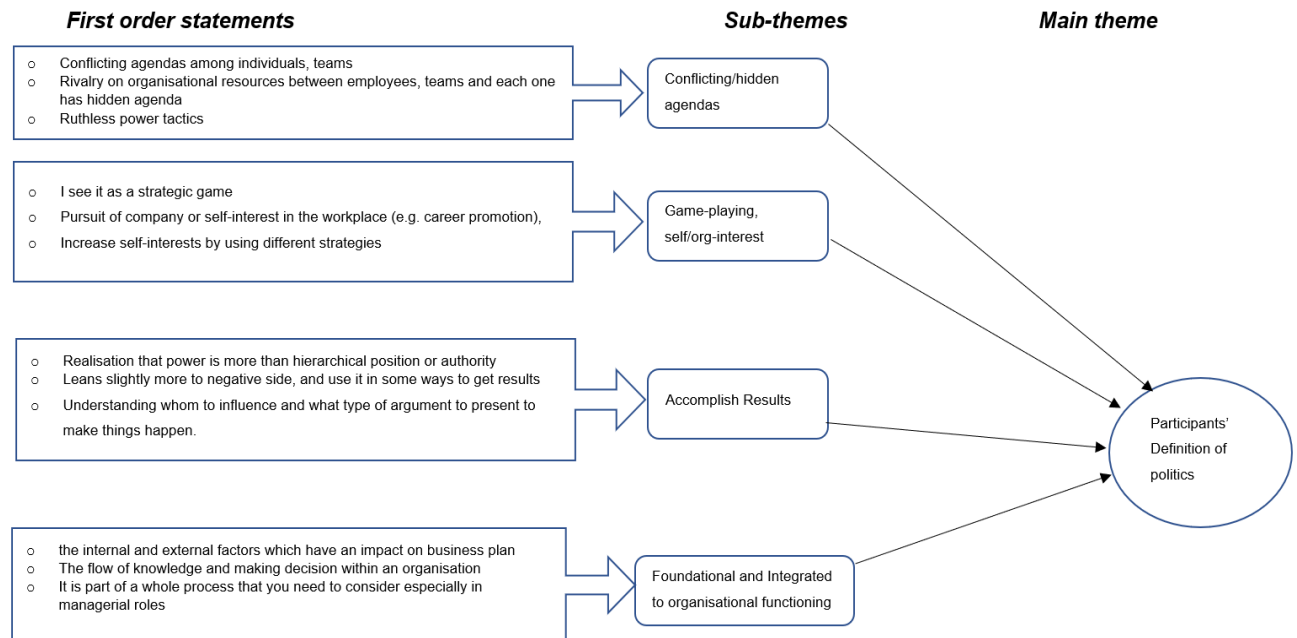


Figure 5.1 Participants' Definition of Organisational Politics

Four distinct perspectives on organisational politics appeared across the twenty-seven interview participants.

One group of participants had a reactive perspective on organisational politics. They viewed it as conflicting agendas.

“My understanding of organisational politics is that employees from different levels have respective hidden agendas, which may become the source of conflict.” (Bader, Employee, Upstream Division).

“I believe, if you can slice the organisation, you will see conflicting agendas appear in every slice. You can see it in various forms across different levels in the organisation. The problem is people use bad tactics or their power to win” (Ismail, Employee, Upstream Division).

Several participants deliberated that conflicting and hidden agendas in the organisation are major issues to the extent which pursuing them involve competition for the same – inevitably scarce – organisational resources.

Shabib exemplifies the resource allocation point;

“Everybody in the company is seeking to achieve the common targets, which have been set by the executive team and cascaded to the line managers. However, the tension and conflict occur in what is the most effective approach to reach that targets and tends to evolve then through all the power on how... everyone’s opinion on the way to achieve targets, emerges through who allocates the resources, whether it is human resources or financial resources. I think, all of the tension in most organisations, one way or another, is because of the resource allocation and how to increase self-gain of the available resources.” (Shabib, Employee, Midstream Division).

This group of individuals attempt actively to keep a distance from organisational politics and avoid it because they viewed it occurring at a distance. They were basically observing or reacting to organisational politics, with minimum confrontation or indirect involvement and had a strong desire to shun politics. A number of participants had a negative opinion of organisational politics as expressed in these interview extracts:

“Based on my work experience so far, I found office politics were worse than country politics so, I try not to become part of it.” (Ismail, Employee, Midstream Division).

“... I’m not used to confrontation, so I find office politics very difficult for me to handle. Likewise, I find it problematic when it is happening around me.” (Bushra, Employee, Downstream Division).

“...Honestly, most of the time I try to avoid it and stay away from it unless it is absolutely directed at me.” (Bader, Employee, Downstream Division).

Few participants held a neutral opinion of organisational politics. More specifically, Shabib commented:

“I just focus on my job and ensure to make it right, so I do not really care about that side of things. I do not think I get particularly involved in politics.” (Shabib, Employee, Midstream Division).

“I think, it probably involves some tactics that some people employ to climb up a company ladder.” (Marwan, Employee, Midstream Division).

The existence of conflicting agendas certainly elevated the issue of how one can understand and navigate these various interests. For this reason, a second group of participants had a more proactive or strategic perspective and viewed it as a beneficial strategy which could be used to maximise or protect the company's interests or self-interests. One of the participants provided a definition and description similar to what was referred in the literature.

"...I think, it is when someone attempts to increase his/her self-interests by using different strategies or tricks to get what he/she wants..." (Mahmood, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division)

Two participants considered organisational politics as a strategy which could be employed in specific situations. For example, Ismail commented:

"I know politics may sound a negative term, but I think, it is a word for relationships within an organisation."

He explained further:

"I always seek somebody who I know within that team, rather than maybe the person who has the information."

Suleiman commented:

"Individuals who employ organisational politics can discern the strategic perspectives of how they work and the political framework within which they work and that can make them adequately flexible to make difficult stuff done through a highly politicised environment."

"...I see it as a strategic game. When I hear the word politics or like a mind game. Individuals have their own motives and selfish but what you see is just the tip of the iceberg. So, it is a game, you have to be prepared, make your strategy and you have to know which side you're on and be able to win."
(Isaaq, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Participants in a third group were reluctant to say much on the matter and generally viewed politics as cunning, yet they, at times, unwillingly employed it to achieve desirable outcomes.

Some of the participants had a conflicted opinion of organisational politics. Although, they had unwillingly employed politics to reach their goals and could describe benefits of it when prompted, yet they would not favour having to employ it, viewing

it as potentially “cunning” to “get things done”. Ibtisam held a view of organisational politics as essentially manipulative in nature:

“it always leans slightly more to the negative side than the positive, but you have to use it in some ways even though it makes me feel a bit uncomfortable... otherwise how you can get what you want?”

Younis said:

“...Sometimes I need to use politics to get work done but it is not something I love to do because you may appear as a cunning manipulator in the eyes of others...”

Regardless of the nature of the objectives pursued, a number of participants remarked engagement in politics was equal with the exercise of unofficial influence, as opposed to formal authority. Key aspects of this type of influence were viewed in terms of having an ability to identify the unsanctioned power structures, to classify key decision-makers and the type of arguments required to convince them. The following interview extracts illustrate this point:

“Politics is the ability to influence and use power to achieve the goals through the informal business channels.” (Idrees, Entry-level Leadership, Midstream Division)

“Politics is not my cup of tea but, in my view, it is knowing whom to influence and how to present your arguments to reach your goals. Hence, it is not a straight line to the individual who should make the decisions according to the organisational structure; but approaching someone who can influence the decision-maker. Mostly understanding the people, organisation, and identifying ‘the power base selling’ or simply where the foxes in the workplace are.” (Yousuf, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Downstream Division)

The fourth group understood organisational politics as an essential dimension of how the organisation functioned and was essential for information flow and decision-making.

Ali described organisational politics as:

“the flow of knowledge, making decision and power within an organisation.”

The view that organisational politics was essential for the efficient functioning of the organisation was expressed by members of this group.

For example, Hamood had this to say:

“organisational politics is about how we accomplish our goals, how we communicate, how we network, how we establish relationships, so it is indispensable.”

Similarly, Azzan described it as:

“the internal and external factors which have an impact on the business plan.”

Haitham also noticed how his perspective on organisational politics had changed throughout his career:

“After university, it was my first real exposure to the work environment, there were many political games and hidden agendas which I didn’t recognise them clearly at that time... My beliefs and perceptions about politics is probably very different 15 years than it was when I started my first career ... but it is part of a whole process that you need to consider especially in managerial roles”

These sub-themes of organisational politics are summarised in Table 5.3

Table 5.3 *Sub-themes of Participants’ Definitions of Organisational Politics*

Definitions of Organisational Politics
<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Conflicting, hidden agendas○ Game-playing, self/organisation interest○ Accomplish Results○ Foundational and integrated to organisational functioning

The defining elements of organisational politics described in table 5.3 are not essentially comprehensive or symmetrical and completely embraced within the participants in this sample; but they did express shared patterns of meaning on the subject of organisational politics.

The aim of the current section was to offer a definition of 'organisational politics' by elucidating and summarising these patterns of individual meanings because the term 'organisational politics' is often utilised broadly in the following extracts, including when citing of participants quotes. Hence, it is imperative to elucidate its meaning beforehand.

Interestingly, one of the leader participants spoke about the importance of redefining or revamping the term 'organisational politics.' Her argument, supported by annotations suggested by several participants in OGS, was that organisational culture forms the perceptions towards organisational politics:

"The problem is the term politics has a negative name or impression and a bad reputation. Indeed, organisational politics brings some negative impacts, and that could be because of work environment and organisational culture. As a manager or executive, we use this language when we talk about the type of leadership style and how to make things happen, and that actually necessitates, to some extent, exercising political skill" (Zakiya, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Political skill is a construct, which was introduced more than three decades ago as an essential competency to possess to be effective in organisations. Unfortunately, even with appeals by organisational scholars to further develop this construct, it remained inactive until very recently. In the next section, the researcher presents participants' views and the importance of the political skill.

5.3.2 Political Skill

The second part of organisational politics and one of the purposes of this research is to explore the notion of political skill. In this section, the researcher illustrates participants' view towards political skill and its main components. This shall increase our understanding of employees' experience of organisational politics as suggested in objective four of this research.

Most participants did not speak about their opinions and attitudes toward politics only, but additionally shared their real engagement in organisational politics. They explicitly deliberated what it meant to navigate office politics successfully and how their skills to engage in politics had developed with experience and time.

Participants shared a number of political behaviours they had experienced or observed others manifesting. The aim of the current section is not to develop a classification of political behaviours, but to distinguish which behaviours created a skilled way of engaging in politics, from participants' perspective. Therefore, the current section reports the findings relating to political skill as illustrated in Figure 5.2 below.

The Study Two data analysis indicated five dimensions related to political skill: political awareness, developing networks and relationships, creating alignment, versatile influence, and authenticity. Participants spoke about political skill, as it was relevant to the job performance. Therefore, the identified five dimensions of political skill were developed in the context of managerial positions.

Table 5.4 *Dimensions of Political Skill*

Dimensions	Description
Political awareness	Capability to read the political landscape, understanding individual interests and motives, identifying clashing agendas, navigating the informal power chain, spotting the main stakeholders and decision makers
Building networks and relationships	Ability to purposely build social networks and strong relationships, contributory to attain business goals and navigating organisational processes through giving access to key stakeholders in a particular situation. Informed by political awareness skills.
Establishing alignment	Ability to distinguish between the rival agendas and to find shared ground in the number of interests at stake through coalitions and alliances. Needs leveraging on networks and relationships.

Versatile influence	Ability to acclimatise one's influence behaviour to diverse situations and individuals. Depends on previous dimensions.
Authenticity	Ability to engage in politics in a way, which make individual feels genuine and harmonious with his/her personal values and preferred styles. Requires honesty, and candidness. Upholds the other engagement skills.

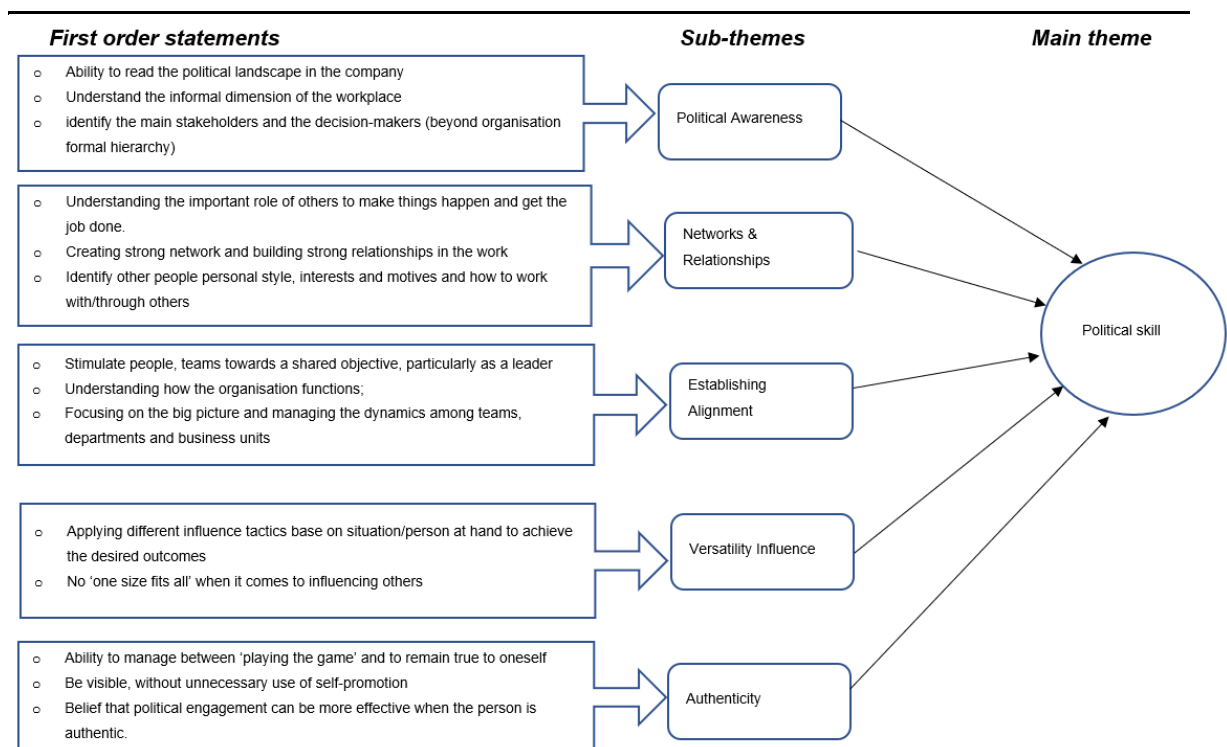


Figure 5.2 Political Skill Dimensions

The following subsections illustrate the five dimensions in more details based on the participants' views and explanations.

5.3.2.1 Political awareness

The first dimension of political skill frequently mentioned by participants was the capability to identify or effectively understand the politics of the worksite. This involved observing hidden agendas in the organisation and spotting the right stakeholders and main decision-makers, in order to determine the appropriate

approach to influence them. Ahmed for example spoke about the significance of spotting the main stakeholders, and also navigating their informal networks:

“In terms of the politics, you need to observe different networks to understand who’s reporting to whom. You got to know who is working with whom, who has... I mean the ‘power’, it is usually used to refer to the consumer, however occasionally this is applied internally as well. Sometimes, it is obvious when you observe the networks inside the company, who networks with whom, who has the real power, who is a manager but in reality, he does not have any decision-making power.” (Ahmed, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Although Ahmed appeared to think that identifying power base within these casual networks is quietly simple, most participants viewed this endeavour to be challenging, given that the informal power web of organisations is somewhat hidden. Haitham for example forewarned of attempting to determine the main decision-maker based on the first group meeting because it could be misleading:

“...I think you need to increase your organisational awareness continually by recognising the informal decision-making networks, who are the key individuals in making decisions. Sometimes, you get confused and you think a certain individual is in charge, but he/she isn’t! So, mastering organisational awareness takes time...it is crucial skill if you are in managerial role to accomplish the required result by knowing who the key individuals in the company are and who can make this result attainable?” (Haitham, Entry-level Leader, Downstream Division)

Participants in the leadership roles emphasised the importance of political awareness skill because it is needed not only internally, within the organisation, but also externally, for example in negotiating with external clients.

For instance, Suleiman mentioned how political awareness was important to anticipate collaboration and opposition from clients and accordingly to determine whether to engage with them or not:

"I think, as a manager, you have to analyse and understand in advance the position of your stakeholders including customers, and whether they are in your side or neutral or against you. Accordingly, you set your relationship strategy. There is no one strategy fits all. You will find some individuals who wish to destroy your reputation while others want to establish alliances with you." (Suleiman, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division)

Additionally, the above quote encapsulates one of the main ideas of political awareness, viz. the ability to distinguish what individuals' background is, what stimulates that individual and to whom their loyalties are devoted. Despite the fact that, most participants emphasised the advantages of political awareness dimension, a number of participants elaborated in-depth what precisely this awareness required.

For example, one of the participants stated that the key point to maximising political awareness was through recognising others' perspectives and identifying what stimulated and motivated them:

"In my opinion, the main points to be successful in politics - if you need to use politics in your position - is to understand people's ways of thinking and their personalities. Hence, you should approach everybody who is significant to your career and your personal life with the intention that I need to know your personality and everything about you, I need to know what your priorities are. You need to know, that kind of information...and to reach everyone who direct or indirect interests in your work, it is virtually typologies inside, in that kind of way." (Zakiya, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Based on this notion of political awareness, a number of participants were of the opinion that the recognition of others' agendas and interests were vital strides in positioning and endeavouring a leadership role. Faisal and Ismail express this interconnectedness between various levels of political awareness, comprising identification of personal agenda as linked to other individuals' agendas and to the wider organisational aspects:

"... In my opinion, the difficult part is to view it from others perspective, and attempt to understand their key motives, so that you can use their motives to your advantage. It requires you to wear their shoes and viewing it using their

lens. By doing so, I think as a leader, you should be able to identify a way through easily, or, if not, at least you become aware of the reasons of taking or following certain position.” (Azzan, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

“I think you need to understand the political landscape. This is the first step because it allows you to identify what is motivating people, or what is driving people’s agendas and what are people’s interests. After that, you can begin to position yourself in a way to become part of that landscape and you can link your plan with people’s interest, agenda, priorities, and people’s kind of political landscape.” (Younis, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Furthermore, in highlighting the importance of political awareness, the above quote provides a clue of the connection between becoming aware of politics and becoming able to engage in it. Most participants consider these two sides of political skill as interrelated. To demonstrate that, Abdullah clearly links between how the organisation works unofficially to the ability to pursue business or personal goals in the quote below. Additionally, the quote shows that an astute understanding of individuals’ drives crystallises into political knowledge of organisational processes.

“I think you need to know how the organisation works, informally as much as formally. This will help you to know who has good connections with whom, who has the power bases in order to get things done in the organisation, I attempt to answer all these questions when I start a new job. I know formally for example, to go for training according to HR policy, I have to get it approved by the department director only. However, we all now, the big boss will not approve it unless his secretary initials it! So, in fact, I have to please both of them in addition to my line manager if I want my training request to get through.” (Abdullah, Employee, Downstream Division).

In summary, the current sub-section has elucidated and substantiated the concept of political awareness, fundamentally perceived by participants as the ability to recognise group and individual agendas astutely, to identify informal power dynamics, and to judge how someone's personal agenda fits within the organisational political landscape. In other words, political awareness is identical with the ability to observe, evaluate and identify organisational politics.

Although political awareness was viewed by the participants as a principal component of handling politics skilfully, it was regarded as imperative also to engage in political action successfully. Ibtisam described this complementarity of awareness and engagement skills thus:

"I think, recognising the 'politics' is just the first half of the battle and the second half I think is, learning the right time to use it." (Ibtisam, Employee, Midstream Division).

In the next sections, the researcher illustrated the main engagement skills as exemplified by participants in extracts from their interviews.

5.3.2.2 Building Network and Relations

Based on the data analysis, building relationships and networks has emerged as a second engagement skill. This skill is normally perceived as essential to developing political awareness and exercising political influence. From a political standpoint, building networks and relationships is closely connected with recognising and influencing key stakeholders when pursuing self-agenda or business objectives. The significance of relationships is often considered in the context of navigating the rival commitments of a matrix organisation in these companies.

"I think, if you want to be successful, you need to develop a strong relation with your direct supervisor and the key individuals who you need their support to progress in your career." (Fadhila, Employee, Upstream Division).

Although the emphasis on relationships and networks was prominent across all companies, the organisational culture appended a fascinating minor difference in how this theme was referred to.

Several leaders in the upstream business were influenced by their experiences with a company leadership development programme, which placed a strong focus on relationship development. Therefore, they acknowledge clearly the crucial role of building relationships when speaking about the interpersonal nature of politics. On the other hand, the leaders from midstream and downstream businesses framed the interpersonal dimensions of politics by drawing more on the idea of building networks and working with and through people. These differences are expressed by the quotes below.

Mahmood is aware of the fact that developing relationships will provide him a better understanding of other people's agendas, and consequently paving the way to pursuing his own agenda:

"For me, the first thing I do when starting any role is to identify very clearly who are the main stakeholders which I have to build relationships and work with, but I would do it in as positive a way as I can, rather than starting with a hidden agenda, or something like that. Once I build a good relationship with someone, then it should be much easier to understand their agendas and I can see if we have any common interests" (Mahmood, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division)

Mahmood considers managing politics is basically about people and the idea of being aware how one's political actions can affect others. Therefore, while for Yaqoob the emphasis is on the relationship development, for Mahmood the focus is on the transactional part of the relationships. Possibly, these alterations are symbolic of organisational cultures, categorised by a diverse focus on co-operation and competition respectively:

"In my view, since politics is all about individuals, you have to know the right people, you should know the potential outcomes as well of working behind the scenes, both the negative and positive outcomes. Accordingly, you can identify what kind of exchanges you have to do with each individual to achieve your targets" (Yaqoob, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Thus, while most participants perceived managing relationships as a key element of political skill, the way they described it actually was somehow influenced by the contextual distinctions in their organisational cultures.

This is appearing somewhat in the different words they used to refer to interpersonal connections and dependencies ('connections' in upstream versus 'relations' in midstream and downstream). For instance, in the following interview extract, Mohammed describes the value of building a good network and illustrates that cultivating it is not about using people, unlike leaders from downstream who talk about relationships, he speaks about 'links':

"I have a strong network. It is one of the important skills which I encourage leaders to learn. But one important thing here, which is, you have to differentiate between using people to push your personal agenda and networking with people to build a strong community within the organisation. Look at it from the point that as a whole the company, we can be stronger if we build all these good links." (Hamood, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

In summary, it was an evident that building relationships and networks was a vital skill perceived by most interviewees, irrespective of minor differences in terminologies used to manage these relationships.

5.3.2.3 Establishing Alignment

Establishing alignment was identified as a third dimension of political skill. The ability to create alignment depends on the other dimensions namely political awareness and building networks with the main stakeholders. The necessity of creating alignment was often mentioned in the context of the capability to manage in a matrix organisational structure. This highlights the symmetry between the political complexities all leaders had to deal with.

For instance, Yousuf emphasised the importance of creating alignment on the successful implementation of company strategy or functional objectives followed by different stakeholders:

"Part of my responsibilities is to ensure that the individuals and teams are aligned with the strategy of what we are trying to achieve. We developed a strategy for the company, which is aligned with the parent company as well. So, I guess the political point is important here to ensure the right people are aligned together which I think can be achieved through having the right

conversations with them. Because as you may know, there are functional leads and sometimes there is a conflict agenda and not to complete in sync with each other. So, my job is to steer the business short- and long-term goals and make that alignment across functions.” (Yousuf, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Recalling his experience on one of the projects, which entailed navigating political dynamics, Shabib stresses the point of aligning workmates by receiving the buy in from their managers. He used the term ‘second line’ as a shared approach to indicate matrix dependencies within the company:

“...honestly, I faced some resistance at the beginning from the end users, so I tried to employ my persuasion and influencing skills. The technical director, who has a technical background and limited experience in business support, was my second line manager and has a key role in my annual evaluation. However, my first and direct manager was giving clear instructions to implement new procedures. The technical team has to accept them and follow them as well. Yet, you cannot just sort of implement new procedures without getting the buy in from the key users. This is one of the examples where I have to be cautious because I am dealing with quite difficult politics here between my first line manager and the second line manager especially; I know that the second line manager has a higher power than my first line manager in the organisation.” (Shabib, Employee, Upstream Division)

Several participants highlighted that creating alignment necessitates that it is built on the other dimensions of political skill. The following quote illustrates how Mohammed believes political awareness is important as a basis to create alignment to pursue managerial goals:

“If you want to be successful in a leadership position in any organisation, you have to create alignment among individuals and that necessitates understanding of those individuals, their personalities, and expectations. As a manager, I have to balance between my department goals and other department managers’ expectations or plans because they are all linked to achieve the ultimate aim.” (Majid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Based on the interviewees' standpoint, creating alignment involved several perspectives. The first perspective stated by the interviewees is the identification of key decision makers among the stakeholders. These were commonly considered to be direct managers who were responsible for meeting specific goals, as well as other parties (individuals, groups, departments) whose commitment was essential to achieve these goals:

"I worked as a head of a planning team and my job required me to work with different managers from various departments to set the plan and the key indicators of achievement. In order to develop a clear plan, I have to identify clearly from the beginning the main stakeholders, the decision-makers, the level of contribution in the business plan, the level of engagement, kind of relations I need to build with each team and all these details upfront... based on my experience; without doing these initial preparation steps, you will find it difficult to set the plan and it will take longer time to get their inputs...and it will show you are not capable of aligning all these departments' plans together..." (Nada, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division).

The second perspective, alignment also depends on creating coalitions and alliances with the main stakeholders. This requires moving from an acknowledgement phase, which focus on understanding individuals' differences to building a shared ground and working toward common goals, while targeting to settle, as much as possible, the range of agendas at play:

"You know, in the work environment, you should not expect all your plans to work in the same way as you expected. So, you have to compromise sometimes, because our partners or coalitions may not share the same objectives. So, there is a trade-off, you may get extra resources in coalitions, but you have to make compromises sometimes as well. For me, this is again politics and you need to set your priorities first to identify the potential gain or loss and then you act accordingly." (Khalid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Based on some interviewees' perspective, alignment was accomplished by proactively attempting to engage in informal organisational processes and not just by depending on the official hierarchical structure of the company alone.

Isaaq's quote below highlights the proactive nature of this political engagement skill:

"Here is the way it works here! There are two ways in making decisions in the organisation. The first one is a formal way which is based on the company structures. But there is another way which I think is more effective, the 'informal influencing', which is how you build alignment to achieve the desired outcomes." (Isaaq, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

5.3.2.4 Versatile influence

Exercising informal influence with versatility was the fourth engagement skill which emerged from the data analysis. Versatile influence was seen as built on the top of political awareness skill. Additionally, managers can use versatile influence as a vehicle to create alignment and to leverage their networks and relationships. Based on his understanding of leader political skill, Musabah emphasises particularly the leader's ability to influence the informal side of the organisation:

"In my opinion, it is about the informal exercise of power within an organisation. And how to achieve results in the company. For me, that is how I see it, and normally it happens under the radar. You know... it is not something you can read about or find it mentioned in the documents or in company policy.

That is politics, surrounding us everywhere and you have to understand how the organisation works, and how to influence the individuals in order to get things done." (Salim, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division).

In addition to that, the majority of participants in leadership positions also considered versatility as crucial to applying interpersonal influence, depending on the situation and the individuals involved in that situation.

"It depends on the level of politics you are dealing with. If you understand somebody's ways of working and what he or she is interested in, then, you can adjust your tactic or approach to adopt without actually behaving in a weird way that you would not normally be. So, by understanding what his or her drives, motives, and what his/her particular desire for the bigger picture

are, I think that will give you good advantages because then you can get along with him and it can give you great results later.” (Azzan, Middle &Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Although a number of leaders appeared to struggle or decisively work towards this behavioural, few of them appeared to demonstrate flexibility with ease. For example, when depicting how he navigates politics, Mahmood proposed that he intentionally used different influencing tactics as illustrated below:

“I observe how people behave in different situations and I focus on the people who I have regular direct interaction with them. Accordingly, I set a number of tactics/approaches of how I am going to deal with him/her. Sometimes, setting one tactic is risky because it might not work”(Mahmood, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division)

The researcher asked him, “how do you typically handle politics?” Suleiman explained how he acclimates his style to the person he is attempting to influence by tailoring the nature of the arguments raised or by trying to influence indirectly through others:

“For me, I take my time to think and analyse the situation, and how I am going to do it which sometimes makes me to think, ‘Am I doing something good or bad to spend a lot of time and energy on this?’ And I always try to change my style based on who I am dealing with. And you know sometimes I attempt to be a more logical and fact-based person if the person is more rational and loves facts, while I follow the emotional style sometimes if I think the person is more emotionally driven.” (Suleiman, Middle &Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

A number of participants proposed that versatile influence is also required to tackle various managerial challenges that entail different political considerations not limited to adapting one’s approach only.

Khalid for example identifies two classifications of situational factors demanding contextual flexibility. The first is at a lower level which requires understanding other individuals’ agendas in your team. The second is at a broad level which requires

understanding the agendas of other departments, business units or regions to build cooperation. He emphasised the importance of a situational approach:

“In my opinion, you deal with politics based on the situation and the people you are dealing with. I do not believe there is a universal approach which will work in all situations.” (Khalid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

In summary, this section demonstrated that versatile influence was context-specific and person-specific. Nevertheless, despite the fact that leaders considered versatility as playing an important role in political engagement, they also underlined the necessity of reflecting personal values. In the final section of political skill, the researcher explains the last dimension of political skill.

5.3.2.5 Authenticity

Authenticity was the last dimension related to political skill. It referred to being genuine, straightforward, honest and transparent when handling politics. For example, Nada is aware of the importance of the political game and stressed the importance for the leaders to make their behaviours aligned with their words.

“...As a leader, I think one of the key things to remember if you want to play the political game is to be careful and not behaving in such a way which you would not do regularly and later you feel ashamed of yourself. Do not decisively go out and befriend people, which you actually cannot assist, purely for the interests, which you perceive you can get from it. In my view, politics is not negative nor positive but the way it is used, make it look good or bad...” (Nada, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division).

The majority of participants in Study Two spoke about authenticity after recognising the importance of political engagement, identifying the key skills required (political awareness, networks and relationships, establishing alignment, and versatile influence).

Several leaders' participants explained the approach they followed to acquire these skills in their leadership roles. Based on their views, authentic engagement in politics primarily depended on the purposes and values behind political action. Majid, for example, mentioned the importance of feeling comfortable when engaging in politics; he spoke about the significance of following what he called 'the right thing' when dealing with politics. His beliefs elevate ethical concerns related to political action and highlight the significance of the subjective experience of political engagement, hence signalling the interdependence between the ethical aspect of transformational leadership and authenticity as a dimension of political skill:

"One of the important things I work hard to achieve is to live comfortably in the world of politics. Every day, I make sure to feel like I have to do my best and to do the right things. I always try to stand for what I believe is right and I'm being authentic." (Majid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Suleiman shared an example of how authenticity came into play in one of his previous leadership roles, which required him to be attentive of the political complexities of a new work environment, and how he developed the ability to navigate them.

Khalfan's story began in accepting his role of technical director in one of the company's international subsidiaries, where his direct employees were subtly resisting change by maintaining enduring allegiances with his Indian predecessor, who became the general director of the business.

Khalfan explained the mixed feelings he experienced while attempting to understand this facet of organisational politics. Consequently, Khalfan followed a less visible way of influencing: he fosters his network and relationship with the general manager whom he considers as a key decision-maker, with the intention that the general manager adopts his vision and executes it as his own. Behind the justification and the employment of Suleiman's political approach is a sense of being authentic, derived from putting forward what he thought were the best ideas in that specific case:

"I prefer to be always seen as authentic, direct, honest, and avoiding saying different things to different people. In that context, I just ensure to meet the

general manager and spend sufficient time with him to align him to what I planned and intended to do until I made him believe in it and consider it as his plan as well. Then, once it became his plan, and I did not really care if employees considered it as his plan or mine because my aim was to move ahead with some pace. For me, I think you just need to follow what is the most effective way to handle the politics but very authentically.” (Suleiman, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Authenticity in the eyes of a number of participants was also closely linked to the idea of being explicit and honest, hence including elements of genuineness and integrity. Marwan, for example, mentioned the importance of ‘transparency’ and avoiding schmoozing other individuals when attempting to describe what a politically skilled leader would preferably appear like:

“I think the leader should be open, direct and honest. In the work, we use the word ‘transparency’ and I think part of transparency might be saying ‘Sorry, I cannot share this information with you right now’ and never being ashamed of saying it. I do believe as a leader, you do not have to tell everyone everything.

But certainly, avoid schmoozing in which you talk to someone informally, especially in a way that is not sincere or to win some advantage for yourself.” (Marwan, Employee, Downstream Division).

In contrast, a number of participants felt that it was hard to be authentic when involved in or confronted with organisational politics. Notwithstanding acknowledging the benefits of ‘playing the game’, several leaders deemed it inauthentic or unnatural to do so and decided to stay away or regulated their engagement in a way which maintained their feeling of being authentic. The excerpts below are revealing of two views related to this issue. Bader spoke about his aversion of workmates who attempted to make relationships without taking a genuine interest in others, hence depicting a perceived lack of authenticity in relation to other individual’s political actions:

“You know one of the bad politics in the organisation which I really hate it is when someone is flattering me, and I know he is not honest and just looking for his personal interests. One of the examples, you know I am very interested

in tennis and one of the managers sometimes approaching me to tell me about it and asking me some questions or the latest news about it. However, I know he does not have any interest in tennis or even absolutely zero interest in it, but he is just using it as ice-break to chat with me and getting some confidential information about other managers. For me, it is easy to differentiate this kind of person because they will come again next week to ask me the same questions or telling me exactly the same information because they do not remember what I told them last week. So, it becomes obvious the reason of doing it is just that they have a strong desire to really get something out of me and certainly are not interested to be my friend.” (Bader, Employee, Upstream Division).

Ismail in the other hand spoke about politics as related to career advancement, signifying that the essential point is to ‘be true to oneself’ and avoid behaviour dominated by contemplations about the career benefits of political engagement.

“For me, if I attempted to imitate or follow a certain style which did not suit me or did not appear naturally, then I might have better opportunity to progress very fast in my career and I could be in one of the senior positions now. But my priority was and will stay to be myself.” (Ismail, Employee, Midstream Division)

One of the female participants considered authenticity challenging because of a perceived mismatch between political engagement and standard definitions of femininity in the local culture. Bushra’s quote below exemplifies this stance:

“You know since we were children, my family and relatives keep repeating that ‘be wise and behave well because either you will be rewarded for the good work or be punished for the bad one.’ I know I am a typical woman, and I do not have any interest in politics or getting involved in politics because in our society; most commonly, you see men talk about it and exercise it, not women, so I consider it a man’s thing. In the west, you see women

participating actively in politics but not in the middle east because our culture does not support it.” (Bushra, Employee, Downstream Division).

On the other hand, the other female participants were less vehement in their refusal to engage in politics, there was a degree of self-censure and self-monitoring when involving in politics, precisely related to their gender. They referred to the concept of authenticity by illustrating to which extent – as women - they can ‘be themselves’ when involving in politics. Zakiya for example spoke about the risk of being perceived as too tough as a woman:

“You know! I do not like to appear as a man because simply I don’t want people to see me as being incredibly tough. I know myself, I am tough person and harsh but fair. And I know there are several men in the work who come in and engage hard with me because they consider me as being harsh and hard, when in reality I am not. They might be looking at it from a different angle and that is why I am trying to be cautious every time I do or engage in politics.”
(Zakiya, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

It can be seen, that although most participants illustrated in some form the significance of appearing authentic when engaging in politics, the term as such was described somewhat by a number of participants. Two of them referred to the company leadership development programme where they had clearly explored and learned the importance of authenticity when managing people. However, several interviewees highlighted similar issues without using the tag of ‘authenticity’. They stressed the importance of engaging in politics in a way which was honest, direct and transparent with personal principles based on fairness.

5.3.2.6 Summary of political skill section

The political skill section defined and explained the key dimensions of political skill. A first facet of political skill was political awareness, or the ability to read astutely conflicting agendas within the political landscape. While the main emphasis of this dimension was to diagnose the workplace environment, the other four dimensions of political skill related to leaders’ actual engagement in politics. Identified as critical to skilful political engagement were the ability to build relationships and networks, to create alignment, to exercise versatile influence, and to engage in politics

authentically. These dimensions build on each other and complement each other; therefore, they seem to be interrelated.

While every participant identified these as relevant political skills, the participants did not necessarily specify that these dimensions were exercised or mastered by all leaders. In fact, there were a number of instances where several leaders had developed political skill with time and experience. In summary, the five dimensions of political skill were not static but rather dynamic.

5.3.3 The Positives and Negatives Impacts of Organisational Politics

The positive and negative impacts of organisational politics appeared as one of the main discussion point raised by the participants while expressing their experience of organisational politics. In fact, organisational politics was seen as having an impact both on the organisational and individual levels.

In the current section, the researcher highlights both the positive and negative impacts of organisational politics on organisational and individual outcomes according to the lens through which participants viewed organisational politics. A summary of positive and negative outcomes of organisational politics at organisational and individual levels as perceived by the participants are presented in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 *Positive and Negative outcomes of OP*

	Individual	Organisation
Positive Outcomes	Career advancement (10)	Higher productivity/achieve outcomes (17)
	Governing own behaviours (3)	Conflict resolution (6)
	Feeling satisfied (2)	Creates debate (4)
		Better coordination (2)
		Higher creativity (2)
Negative Outcomes	Intention to leave (18)	Lower productivity (19)
	Affects concentration (14)	Loss of focus on organisational goals (12)
	Frustration (13)	Tension (9)
	Anxiety (10)	Divisions/factions/internal fracturing (9)
	Stress (10)	Lack of clarity about what is happening (8)
	Low motivation (8)	High staff turnover (4)
	Vagueness (7)	
	Self-interests (6)	

5.3.3.1 Positive Impacts: Individual Level

The participants provided very few positive outcomes on the individual level compared to that of the organisational level. More specific, the participants used career advancement/acceleration/ progression or similar words around 10 times as one of the positive outcomes of organisational politics at individual level. Below are quotes relating two examples of positive consequences shared by participants:

“...Politics is not always negative. It can benefit the individual as well the organisation. It can help individual to progress in his/her career or increase his/her job profile and contribution...” (Fadhila, Employee, Upstream Division)

“...your ability to engage in organisational politics in a productive manner shall certainly help you to progress faster in the company and get you promoted.” (Hamood, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division)

“One of its benefits, I think, it makes you observe and control your behaviours because you think ahead of the consequences...” (Salim, Entry-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

In addition, two participants reported happiness and higher satisfaction as positive consequences for individuals. Below are a number of participants' quotes indicating several positive consequences of organisational politics on individual level:

“... As a manager, doing a good politics sometimes makes me feel more satisfied especially when I use it to help or influence others for better results...” (Ali, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division)

Last but not least, participants with a 'reluctant' or 'reactive' lens were less likely to describe positive individual outcomes and most of individual outcomes were provided by participants with 'integrated' 'strategic' lens.

5.3.3.2 Positive Impacts: Organisational Level

In comparison to positive outcomes for individuals, participants provided many examples of positive outcomes for the organisation. There were fifteen comments on individual positive outcomes compared with twenty-six comments on positive outcomes for the organisation.

The vast majority of positive organisational consequences were illustrated by participants with a 'strategic' or 'integrated' lens. Examples of the positive outcomes reported by the participants were higher performance, conflict resolution, higher creativity, and effective communication. For example, three participants comment regarding positive organisational consequences including:

"...if the organisational politics are well managed it can enhance employees' performance and increase their productivity because politically skilled leaders have the ability to attend to employee interpersonal needs, which can affect team performance..." (Yaqoob, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

"Leaders who have good political skill can manage political behaviours which affect work performance..." (Samiyah, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

"...if you view the politics as an approach or ideas that employees feel strongly about, that could be a motivating factor which assists an organisation move on and achieve better results..." (Nada, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Another participant commented about the positive impact of organisational politics on resolving conflict:

"...I remember in one of the cases, where there was a big conflict between operations team and drilling team. We reached a stage when we stopped any form of discussion and the case was escalated to the deputy CEO. The deputy CEO was a very political person and knew how to sort things without using his authority or chain of commands...I remember when we finished the meeting everyone was smiling, and it was a win-win situation..." (Hamood, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

The third positive outcome reported by the participants was creating debates among departments and individuals, particularly when a manager is appropriately politically skilled. Specifically, politically skilled manager can manage organisational environments which are under stress successfully. In addition to that, the participants reported other positive outcomes such as increasing the communication among departments and increasing creativity:

“...When managers or employees have a different point of view and different ideas they must agree to the intellectual dynamism. One can strive to get a proper solution after the debate....I think we learn from political processes, and they can give the company better advantage if they are well managed” (Suleiman, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

“I think it can give better coordination when various activities and operations are set up outside the company. The individuals attempt to be united and establish better coordination among themselves. This results in the efficient completion of projects...this is from personal experience” (Yousuf, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Additionally, a few participants believed that politics could provide flexibility and higher creativity.

“I think positive political behaviour can develop more flexibility and creativity. For example, last year, we were behind the work schedule and we were throwing all the blame on supply chain team and vice-versa. However, our department manager managed to minimise the friction among both departments, and to associate with supply chain team to come up with an idea to speed up the process. We worked together and re-engineered the whole process to be effective and efficient. Finally, we achieved the targets and also received CEO recognition to develop the new processes which saved the company time and cost.” (Mahmood, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division).

In summation, participants reported a wide range of organisational and individual positive outcomes of organisational politics. Participants with an integrated' or 'strategic' lens frequently shared positive outcomes while participants with a 'reactive' or 'reluctant' lens frequently reported negative outcomes as discussed in the next subsections.

5.3.3.3 Negative Impacts: Individual Level

The participants provided 66 comments on the consequences of organisational politics on the individual level. Many participants reported intention to resign stress, the company, low motivation, frustration, feeling isolated, and anxiety. Most of these negative outcomes were described by participants with a 'reactive' and 'reluctant' lens. For example, one of the participants provided 13 different comments about the negative individual outcomes which included being: "constantly feeling frustrated and stressed with the process"

and sometimes feeling:

"no point to do extra work and share new ideas because no appreciation and recognition s and promotions are limited for certain individuals in the company... I am thinking seriously to leave..." (Marwan, Employee, Downstream Division).

Another participant said:

"I think politics mutes and warps the voices and opinions of employees..." (Mohammed, Employee, Midstream Division).

Idrees commented:

"I think in highly political environments, individuals tend to feel threatened by the ambiguity, uncertainty, and the self-interest actions which happen with individuals."

Another participant commented also that:

"In my company, promotions opportunities, training, salary adjustment are limited to certain group. It makes you feel very stressful and frustrated...work progress very slowly...and honestly sometimes I leave office feeling

sad...Sometimes it affects my personal and family life as well...I have started to look for new job...” (Bushra, Employee, Downstream Division).

Participants with a ‘strategic’ or ‘integrated’ lens also reported some negative individual outcomes. For instance, Suleiman commented,

“... it has negatives effects like someone can use bad politics to maximise self-interests through informal ways and ending up in troubles like what happened before two years for two individuals in the company...”

In addition, Azzan commented that:

“Politics can create vague work environment where everyone in the company is moving to different directions and feeling lost...”

Samiyah commented that:

“... employees with a lower level of power feel more stressed when they perceive politics in their work environment...”

These reflected her more integrated or philosophical perspective.

5.3.3.4 Negative Impacts: Organisational Level

The negative impact on the organisational level was the last aspect reported by the participants. Many participants reported a lack of clarity of organisational goals, lower productivity, tension among teams, reduced effectiveness, loss of focus on organisational goals, uncertainty, higher rate of resignation, unethical behaviours, and poor culture. Most of these comments and negative outcomes were reported by participants with a ‘reactive’ and ‘reluctant’ lens. Two of the participants reported more than seven comments and below are some of their quotes:

“I have seen it affecting team productivity and performance, so I think when politics increases, productivity decreases.” (Salim, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

“Negative political situations may not break the organisation, but it makes its progress very slow...” (Yousuf, Employee, Downstream Division).

“employees lose sight of what they’re employed to do because of the bad politics...” (Shabib, Employee, Midstream Division).

One of the participants also argued that:

“politics can split the whole organisation into silos...” (Idrees, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Ali and Khalid provided opinions which more generally reflected their integrated or philosophical perspective. For instance, Ali argued that:

“if the political behaviour creates issues, then you might have the wrong mix of managers around the table...” (Ali, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

“it can create a negative image of workplace, promote self-interest, and thus individuals keep enforcing and spreading their negative perspective of organisational politics...” (Khalid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

In summation, participants provided a broad range of organisational and individual outcomes of organisational politics. While participants with an ‘integrated’ and ‘strategic’ lens frequently reported positive outcomes, participants with a ‘reactive’ or ‘reluctant’ lens frequently reported negative outcomes.

5.3.4 Transformational Leadership

The last objective of this research is about the transformational leadership, its advantages and barriers which will be covered in this section and in the following section. In this research, the researcher used the Bass and Riggio (2006) definition of transformational leadership. It is seen as a process whereby a leader influences the followers to achieve organisational goals by applying his/her social charisma to inspire followers in the organisation, creating an inspiring vision for the future, stimulating creativity and paying great attention to individuals’ needs and drives. Based on the Bass and Riggio (2006) definition, transformational leadership consists of five components, namely idealised influence attributes, idealised influence behaviour, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Most of the participants in leadership positions are familiar with transformational leadership because it is part of their leadership development curriculum.

Based on the analysis, the participants mentioned the five components identified by Bass and Riggio but there was no specific order or structure because they all related in some form or fashion to each individual question.

These dispositions displayed that transformational leaders are also mentioned by other scholars in the literature as illustrated in chapter two.

In the following sub-sections, the researcher presents the five components mentioned by the participants in more details along with the empirical data.

Table 5.6 *Dimensions of Transformational Leadership*

Dimensions	Description
Idealised Influence (Attributes)	The attributions of leader made by followers based on perceptions they have of the leader. Leader is perceived as being confident, charismatic, decision maker, and focusing on higher-order ideals and ethics.
Idealised Influence (Behaviours)	Followers' observations of leader behaviour. Leaders use their charismatic behaviours which are centred on principles and beliefs. Leaders act in ways which indicate a high-level trust and confidence.
Inspirational Motivation	Transformational leaders stimulate their followers through articulating a compelling vision of the future. They inspire and motivate their employees thru giving meaning and challenge to their work.
Intellectual Stimulation	Transformational leaders encourage their followers to challenge the routine ways and the old styles of performing a task to develop new innovative ways. They stimulate employees' imagination and creativity to invent effective ways to overcome work challenges.
Individualized Consideration	Individually considerate leader gives special attention to each individual employee's needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach and mentor

5.3.4.1 Idealised Influence (Attributes)

Idealised influence attributes were viewed as the charisma of the leader to inspire followers show respect, admiration and loyalty to the leader. It is the ability to build confidence and trust in the leader.

Trust was defined here as the willingness to take personal risks and be always consistent in their behaviours. In the eyes of the employees, these leaders provide a role model and have extraordinary capabilities, determination and persistence.

There was a common consensus among participants that Omani leaders showed idealised influence attributes. The participants focused on three points to describe the idealised influence: the effect of socialised charisma, the importance of decision-making, and the sources of idealised influence attributes.

The first of these is based on the participants view of the 'charisma'. The responses stressed the importance of the charisma to attract followers.

"I think, charisma is the main trait which a leader needs to have because it is a quick way to attract people to you. Charisma in my view entails a number of social and emotional skills. Charismatic leaders can establish strong interpersonal connections with the people and communicate effectively with them and influence people at a deep emotional level." (Khalid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Many participants described the attributes of the charismatic leaders and the way they thought and behaved as illustrated in the following statements:

"They have the strong ability to attract employees around them. They have what is called in leadership term 'the charisma', which I think is the first attribute a leader should have. These leaders have a nice smile and whenever they join the team, they create a friendly atmosphere among team members. For instance, one of the great leaders we have here is the CEO who has a sense of humour and whenever you meet him, he makes you smile. Such a leader, makes you feel proud to follow him or her." (Ahmed, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

"You know! We use a number of assessment tools and questionnaires to get employees feedback about the leadership team as a part of personal

development plan. We ensure this exercise is conducted by an external party to ensure confidentiality and credibility of the data. When I saw the feedback sheet, many employees mentioned that I have the charisma, which is something I am proud to hear. I read a lot about great leaders and their behaviours and I found charisma is one of their attributes. So, I started to read about it and took some courses to learn how to improve it. I love engaging with people and I do my best to win their trust. Also, I keep practicing effective listening skill and I try to choose my words carefully.” (Ali, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

A few participants believed that charisma was something leaders were born with. There are a number of writers who believe that charisma is some innate quality or characteristic and you either have it or you do (Ruvolo, Peterson, & LeBoeuf, 2004). For example, Gandhi or Martin Luther King are considered to have been charismatic leaders and who possessed some outstanding qualities.

On the other hand, there is growing supporting evidence that people can become more charismatic. Specifically, there are certain traits which individuals can practice and apply to make him/her appear more magnetic, trustworthy and influential. In the following statements, the researcher is presenting both views as mentioned by the participants.

“The real leaders have an aura around them and born with it. I think the aura builds their charisma and makes them to be a star in the company and I think that is one of the reasons my current manager was selected for a senior leadership role in the company. She has a strong passion, calm, magnetic to be around, and you will notice that if you get a chance to meet her. She appears very confident in presentation and public speaking, which is uncommon in our society. When you chat with her, she makes you feel good about yourself and makes you feel important and she is interested to listen to you.” (Ibtisam, Employee, Midstream Division).

“I worked with a leader who used to be considered as an ordinary person and as a team we all underestimated him and honestly did not expect him to take higher leadership position in future. A few years later, he was sent to work in

the field with a contractor for five years. When he came back, we noticed the guy had changed in terms of his charismatic social skill like level of confidence, engagement and communication skills and got smart ways in dealing with people in different levels in the organisation. Recently, he was promoted to be the section head and more than twenty employees reporting to him. He got employees respect and trust and everyone in the team was talking about his charismatic way in dealing with staff. So, if you get the chance to work with him, mostly, you will feel excited and you will be willing to perform or give more than required even if it is outside working hours or weekend.” (Haitham, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Additionally, the participants emphasised the point that the charisma is acquired as a result of leaders’ positive behaviours with his/her employees:

“You know through my work experience in the oil and gas sector, I have seen real charismatic leaders who search for opportunities to support people and I think this is one of the reasons to be viewed as charismatic leaders. Simply, they give more than they take and sacrifice their self-interest for the sake of others. For instance, last year the company plan was to distribute a small portion of bonus to junior employees due to the decline in the oil prices while managers got their full shares! Legally and as per our contract, the company can do that during the financial crisis, but Ali, corporate affairs director, challenged this principle and convinced the CEO that the negative outcomes the company would get and what type of message the company was sending to them if implementing it. Honestly, everyone in the department was amazed by what he did! He could just take his full share of bonus and no one will blame him, but he is different, and we consider him as one of the true charismatic leaders.” (Salim, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Secondly, many interviewees believe the existence of idealised influence attributes among leaders in Oman is due to their background, which was formed by the local culture and the Islamic values. For instance, the following statement highlights the role of Islamic values in Oman leaders’ behaviours:

"I think Islam has played an important role to shape some leaders' behaviours. Specifically, many Omani leaders who I know are driven purely by religion. You can see it in the way they think, the way they behave, making decisions in almost everything they do! For instance, if they help you in something and you want to pay them back, their answers will be, we were helping you because Islam is encouraging us as leaders to do so without expecting or asking for returns from you. They believe that dealing with people is part of religion's obligations." (Abdullah, Employee, Downstream Division).

"Honestly as a leader, I believe people in general follow those individuals who have charisma. Charismatic people are humble, persuasive, and use verses from the Holy Qur'an or Islamic statements as a very strong verbal way of both communication and persuasion. Those leaders are considered as role models for their followers who strive to emulate them." (Majid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

5.3.4.2 Idealised Influence (Behaviours)

While the idealised influence attributes refer to the socialised charisma of the leader, idealised influence behaviours focus on the charismatic actions of the leader. Leaders with high level of idealised influence behaviour are willing to take risks and make personal sacrifices to meet the organisation's objectives. Leaders who demonstrate idealised influence behaviours also follow high standards of ethics and avoid employing power for personal gains. They have a strong sense of purpose and focus on long-term performance.

The participants were requested to clarify the extent to which leaders show the behaviours of idealised influence. Many participants emphasised the importance of leaders' real actions and behaviours in the workplace and that it was all about what they did, not what they said. The following excerpt explains the participant's viewpoint.

"Employees feel confident and trust their leaders based on his or her actions. The true leaders lead by example! If you want people to follow you, walk on

your talk. You do not give them advice and you are not implementing them otherwise, you are contradicting yourself and they do not trust you. Also, employees appreciate those leaders who study problems from different perspectives before making decisions and understand what the consequences on their employees might be.” (Isaaq, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Leader participants mentioned the phrase 'leading by example frequently'. They believe it is one of the main attributes which a leader should possess:

“As a leader, I believe you should walk on your talk, and your actions should speak louder than your words. While listening to some employees in the company, I heard them talking and criticising their leaders because their leaders are giving them advice and on the other hand, they do the opposite! In my view to be a successful leader, let your actions speak for you and you will get your followers respect.” (Hamood, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Leading by example is not just limited to people in leadership position rather it implies for every single employee in the organisation either as a leader/supervisor/manager, people are watching us. They are observing everything we do – whether it is what we would want them to emulate or not as illustrated in the following quote:

“If I have to select one attributes for a good person regardless of his role in the organisation, I will say ‘lead by example’. By doing that, you will become a person whom others want to follow. However, when leaders say one thing, but they do the opposite, they erode trust which I believe is a critical element of productive leadership.” (Zakiya, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

5.3.4.3 Inspirational Motivation

The third dimension of transformational leadership is the inspirational-motivation dimension in which transformational leaders stimulate their employees

through articulating a compelling vision of the future. They inspire and motivate their employees through giving meaning and challenge to their work. They speak enthusiastically about the future goals and express confidence that goals will be accomplished.

The participants were asked to explicate the degree to which Omani leaders exhibited the behaviour of inspirational motivation. The researcher focused on leaders' contribution to the organisation's vision. All participants agreed that entry-level leadership roles were not participating in setting the organisation's vision. Participants believe that leaders in entry-level leadership roles are limited to supervising the daily work only:

“Actually, they do not set their section’s objectives nor involved in organisation long-term plan, so how can they contribute in forming the organisation’s vision?” (Samiyah, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

“Company vision is set by the company board of directors, executive leaders and sometimes they may involve middle managers but for sure not the junior leaders.” (Kholid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

The participants leaders from all three divisions agreed that the leaders in entry-level leadership roles were not involved in setting the long-term goals. Nevertheless, there were different opinions regarding leaders in middle-level roles. In upstream and midstream, the leaders in middle-level leadership roles were involved in setting company's long-term goals but in the downstream, it was limited to the executive leaders and board of directors.

Additionally, responding to the question about the degree to which leaders are practising inspirational-motivation behaviours, the participants from upstream and midstream agreed that middle-leadership class behaved in ways which motivated and inspired employees by providing meaning and challenge to what they were doing.

The leaders in upstream and midstream used motivational phrases and words to inspire their employees to achieve their targets with enthusiasm:

“One of the good practices in the company is that the board of directors encourages middle-level leaders to participate in forming the company future plan. The board requests the CEO to organise a workshop for all leaders from senior level and middle level for brainstorm sessions to propose the company’s plan in the board meeting. It’s the CEO’s responsibility to present the workshop outcomes.” (Suleiman, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

“I worked in both upstream and midstream and I can tell you, we have excellent examples for some leaders in middle-leadership roles who played important roles in setting company long-term objectives. Honestly, I was delighted to see such things happen. One of the good examples is my current manager who is really considered an inspirational leader by the whole team members, received a recognition award from the board for his valuable contribution in strategy session” (Ahmed, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

“Based on my experience in this company, the majority of leaders use motivational words to encourage their employees which I believe it is a powerful tool to inspire their employees. Due to the nature of my job, I got the chance to work with different teams in the company and I heard them encouraging their employees and repeating phrases like ‘That is excellent work! I am proud of you’ or ‘You are a great asset to this company and keep it up.’...” (Shabib, Employee, Midstream Division).

On the other hand, participants from downstream sector shared inconsistent views about leaders in middle-level in their participation in setting long-term plan. A few participants from the downstream highlighted also the ineffective way of communicating the long-term plan with their subordinates.

“Based on my current role in this company, and the previous company which also considered part of downstream business, I did not see or hear any manager from middle leadership role participate in forming company’s long-term plan!” (Yousuf, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

“Yes, there are some managers in middle level leadership role who participate in forming company vision and long-term goal. However, one of the issues I found is the way they present it to their employees is weak and does not give you much hope of a bright future!” (Majid, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

5.3.4.4 Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders encourage their followers to challenge the routine ways and the old styles of performing a task to develop new innovative ways. They stimulate employees' imagination and creativity to invent new and effective ways to overcome work challenges.

Employees who work under transformational leader are encouraged to apply new approaches and they get the full support even if their approach differs from what the leader proposed. Transformational leader always encourages his/her employees to take risks and apply new ideas and he does not criticise their ideas in public if they do not work (Avolio, Bass, et al., 2004; Bodla & Nawaz, 2010).

The intellectual stimulation component plays an important role in boosting employees' performance. The participants highlighted two main factors, which leaders exercised to perform intellectual stimulation: the significant effect of leaders' attitude toward work creativity, and the leaders' capability to create an environment, which supports creativity.

All participants agreed that leaders' attitude toward creativity was a main factor for demonstrating intellectual-stimulation behaviours, but to what extent do leaders in the oil and gas sector have positive attitude towards creativity? The participants' answers varied here. Some leaders are creative and serve as a role model for their followers to emulate them. The passages below elucidate this view:

“I worked with various leaders in this organisation and I can say most if not all consider creativity one of their values and encourage their employees to be creative and come up with creative solutions! Every month, the top management distributes shopping vouchers as a token of appreciation for those who come up with creative ideas to improve work performance and it is

rare to see the list and none of those managers on the list.” (Fadhila, Employee, Upstream Division)

“We are lucky here to have a creative CEO who stimulates creativity and stresses that in all meetings with managers and employees. Additionally, creativity to solve work problems or to improve the work performance has been added as part of the department managers’ performance review score point. I think that is one of the reasons, the company has been ranked as ‘exceed expectations’ by the board for the last three years.” (Ahmed, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

On the other hand, there were few participants who believe that creativity is not a priority for Omani leaders, which discourages employees from producing creative works:

“Generally speaking, we are missing intellectual simulators in this company and you are not welcome here if you try to think out of the box! if you are holding a managerial position and you just prefer the routine work, what kind of messages you are sending to the employees? And do you think they will come up with such idea to improve work performance? I tried several times and my colleagues tried as well but the only answer we all got was ‘No’ or ‘we will see.’ (Ismail, Employee, Downstream Division).

“The real challenge is how leaders’ value intellectual-stimulation behaviours? I used to work with one of the successful companies outside Oman and creativity was one of company’s values but unfortunately, the case is totally opposite here. I tried to convince the management and I showed them real cases supported by numbers where we could improve the company performance if we give some space to the department managers to be creative and not just following the routine work processes in every single work! I think, the problem is, management team used to work in public sector, and they joined the company with the same mentality which I believe does not suit a company working in the private sector!” (Salim, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Several participants in low-level roles shared their concerns towards intellectual stimulation. Their managers encourage them to ‘think outside the box’ but at the end, the managers take the credit. Some of them emphasised the point that the organisations needed to establish an internal protection system to protect employees’ creative ideas from being stolen by their supervisor or department managers.

“Yes, they encourage you to come up with creative solution, but the problem is once you present your idea, it does not belong to you anymore. The manager takes the reward, so it is like ‘someone does the work and someone else takes the credit’ so they look as intellectual simulators but in reality, the idea could belong to someone else.” (Bader, Employee, Upstream Division).

Some leaders in middle leadership roles express their concerns of being intellectual stimulators and encouraging their employees to be creative. They think it might lead to serious work mistakes, which might threaten the company business, or their career advancement as illustrated in these statements:

“Honestly, when I was an employee, I used to believe in creativity and coming up with creative solutions to solve work problems was a good thing. However, in my current managerial role, I feel reluctant to suggest or try new ideas because the outcomes might be disaster and at this age, I cannot afford to lose my job. So, unless it is tested and approved by the company executive team, I will not implement it.” (Mahmood, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division)

“There should be a protection system for the employees’ ideas in the company. It happened to my workmates and to me several times when we suggested new ideas and then we found out that the department manager presented our ideas to the CEO as he was the one who came up with these ideas and he did not mention our names. For example, now, I have a creative idea to reduce maintenance cost which I believe it will save at least 3% of the cost but due to the company policy and organisation hierarchy, I cannot discuss it directly with the CEO or at least the department director so I have to present it to the department manager first and then he will escalate it to the

higher level. Last year, I came up with two ideas and I worked hard to implement them, but the line manager took all credits. So, honestly, I prefer to keep any new idea for myself rather than seeing someone else taking the credit for my ideas” (Salim, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division)

Additionally, Bushra stressed the point that, managers should not attack any new ideas proposed by employees because the idea was different from manager's idea.

Bushra shared a situation of a department manager who criticised and attacked in public one of the team member's idea to reduce operations costs, which caused a negative effect on employees' initiatives.

“One of the big problems we face in the department and dishearten employees from being creative is criticising individuals rather than their ideas in public. I think you agree with me, no one will accept to be criticised in public and in front of everybody in the company because he or she proposed an idea, which was different, or not in line with the line manager's thoughts. A real example happened to one of the senior engineer who was considered as an outstanding performer in the department. As a result, he stopped bringing any new ideas and most of the time he kept silent in our department's meetings and last year he submitted his resignation. Unfortunately, I can see this problem has started to spread among team members in the department.” (Bushra, Employee, Downstream Division).

5.3.4.5 Individualised Consideration

Individually considerate leader gives special attention to each individual employee's needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach and mentor. Leaders should recognise and understand the differences among their followers and create a learning environment where individuals can acquire new skills and learn from each other. Leaders who demonstrate individualised-consideration behaviours are effective listeners and encourage two-way communication. Tasks and duties are delegated to followers to provide experience and to improve followers' competencies. These delegated tasks are observed to provide constructive feedback and to assign the areas of improvement for each individual. During the

financial crisis, individually considerate leaders restructured the organisation responsibly to retain or deploy the employees and avoid layoffs

Interviewees were asked to provide examples describing individual-consideration behaviours. Interviewees focused on leaders' role in providing learning opportunities for employees to expand their skills portfolio. Most participants believed that individual-consideration behaviours were not just limited on employees' social affairs, but in fact were about developing employees' knowledge and skills. Participants stressed the important role of the leader in investing part of his/her time and effort to coach their employees. The participants' quotes are presented below:

"I think it is part of the good leader habit to spend part of his/her time monitoring the learning curve of his employees and to set a development plan for each individual. My current manager added one of the good initiatives to the department is called 'job rotation', which gives the employee the opportunity to expand his knowledge and skills and to learn what other sections are doing. He keeps checking and asking about my learning journey and what is the added knowledge or skills. That is one of the good initiatives I like in this department and keeps me staying here." (Haitham, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division).

"Hani is a great leader! He makes you feel you are a key asset for the department through his words and behaviours. Every day, he spares part of his time communicating with us and listening to us for any improvement or concerns and he takes action immediately." (Abdullah, Employee, Downstream Division).

"I believe, if employee makes mistakes, she should not be punished like many managers do but she should get the chance to correct it and to learn from her mistakes, so the leader's role is to support and encourage the learning environment. I left my previous role because my ex-manager was threatening the employees for any single mistake. However, my current line manager is very supportive, and I remember I made a mistake when I joined the company, but he helped me to understand the problem and how to solve it." (Fadhila, Employee, Upstream Division).

In responding to the question about the degree to which managers demonstrate individual-consideration behaviours, a number of the leaders highlighted the importance of the leaders' ability to treat their employees as individuals rather than just as a member of the team. They stressed that the true leader recognises the individual differences in terms of needs and desires through effective listening and taking the required actions. Below are a few extracts from manager participants illustrating their views:

“As the head of human resources department, one of the complaints I got from many employees is their managers putting a low priority on listening to them, coaching them, and they always use this excuse ‘I am busy!’. Not surprisingly, I found these departments were suffering from low level of engagement for the last two years! Managers ought to understand that employees are humans; they are not machines.” (Hamood, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

“As a department manager, every day, I make sure to spend part of time even for five minutes to sit with one employee in my department to exchange the knowledge and to learn from each other.

Sometimes, you will be surprised how much knowledge he/she has and at the same time, he will thank you for any single new information you share it with him/her. Although it is a simple ritual, the outcomes are huge in so many areas such as their satisfaction, learning, productivity and others. I implemented also ‘the open-door policy’ so everyone is welcome if he/she wants to discuss something personal or has a concern, so we can discuss the alternatives” (Suleiman, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Finally, one of the executives shared his personal experience during the oil prices crisis in 2017. The oil prices went below the budgeted price and the board decided to dismiss some employees and remove a number of the current benefits to cut the cost.

“If you remember, in 2016 the oil prices started to go down but in 2017 it went below the break-even point which means we will be losing a huge amount of money if we continue with the same plan. Hence, the board asked for an

urgent meeting and a requested an action plan to cut off the cost and improve company financial statements. During the meeting, the board requested to stop some of the services and to dismiss some of the employees in operations department and in support services department as well. I did not want to do it and I told the board I can reduce the cost without dismissing anyone and I asked to give me two months to come up with new plan. I did that because I need to be a good example to show my direct subordinates and my followers, I do care for them. After discussing our options in the senior management meeting, I came up with the idea to contact our partners and contractors to discuss the possibility of taking some of our employees for short assignments or cross posting to work with them. I contacted them personally and most of them accepted my proposal to use their services and to pay their salaries. It was a win-win situation because our partners were looking for some technical engineers/technicians for short-term and we could not afford paying their salaries at that time. We implemented other initiatives to reduce costs but without dismissing anyone. Then, I called for staff meeting to keep everyone aware of the plan and to reduce gossiping and rumours. Honestly, I felt very happy for doing such a thing and I received a big card signed by everyone in the company thanking me for this decision.” (Ali, Middle &Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

5.3.5 The Strengths and the Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership in the oil and gas sector in Oman

The last section of this chapter investigates the advantages and the disadvantages of transformational leadership style in the oil and gas sector in Oman. Table 5.7 summarise both strengths and weaknesses as expressed by the participants.

Table 5.7 *The Strengths and Weaknesses of Transformational leadership*

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides vision for future• Makes people inspired and enthusiastic• Solid Foundations• A process rather than exchange relationship• Encourages high standard of Morals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not always detail-oriented.• The possibility of abuse of power• Not Always Effective• Unidirectional Influence• lacking ‘conceptual clarity’

5.3.5.1 The Strengths of the transformational leadership

The transformational leadership style draws on various capabilities and approaches to leadership, generating distinct advantages for the organisation. Leaders exercising this approach set a profound example and clearly communicate their objectives to their followers. Transformational leaders attempt to boost followers’ performance to achieve excellent results. They inspire followers to look beyond their self- interests and focus on the interests and the needs of the team and the organisation.

In this section, the researcher presents the strengths of transformational leadership based on the Study Two participants’ perceptions.

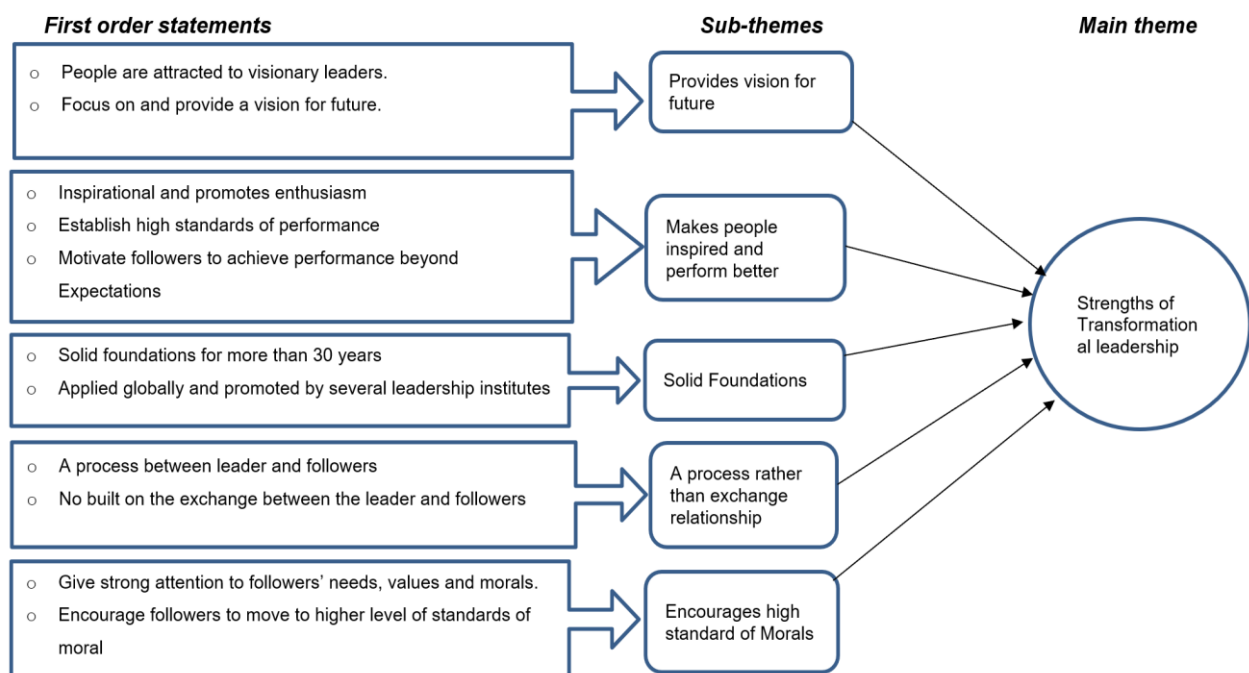


Figure 5.3 Strengths of Transformational Leadership

The first theme which emerged among the responses was the vision creation and implementation. While asking the participants about their perception of strengths of creating and implementation of a vision, the response was that a vision would aid in establishing a more structured and organised roadmap for the organisation. Most participants believe that transformational leaders give first priority to creating a vision for the organisation and then they keep observing the implementation process to ensure it is going in the right direction through engaging their followers. This approach differentiates transformational leadership from other leadership styles in its ability to rapidly evaluate an organisation's current situation and formulate a vision for its development and growth (Northouse, 2018). Transformational leaders cascade and communicate of their visions precisely to other leaders within the organisation, and to all employees to make everyone see the big picture.

The following is a real-life example shared by one of the participants for one of the transformational leaders who managed to change the company financial records from negative to positive figures and the role of vision in his strategy:

"I remember when Ahsan-the former CEO- joined the company and at that time, I was still in the middle management role. The company financial and

operational performance was unsatisfactory. Financially, the company was still making a loss and in future forecast plan was showing negative figures as well. Operationally, there were many problems in the operations, which affected the daily production rate. Ahsan spent sufficient time reading the figures, meeting shareholders and listening to numerous individuals across all levels in the organisation. Then, he called for a meeting with all employees in the organisation to share the new directions and the roadmap for the next ten years. One month later, every director presented his/her department plan along with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to achieve the overall goal. He did not stop there! Instead, he set a quarterly meeting to show the progress of all departments' performance in achieving the overall goal. At the end of the year, everyone was happy because the board recognised the dramatic improvement in the company performance and authorised him to distribute bonuses.... So, for me, he was a true transformational leader who really, I was proud to work with" (Majid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

Salim illustrated how transformational leaders with their great ability to articulate organisation vision can facilitate teamwork, team building, and group cohesion:

"I worked in Europe and USA for long time and I noticed so many differences between here and there, but leadership style is the most obvious one. I heard about transformational leadership in the west and I saw several real examples there of how leaders can establish a clear vision and align all teams to achieve it but very limited examples here in Oman. I got the opportunity to work as a consultant for a number of oil and gas companies in Oman and one of the top challenges was that they were lacking a true leader who could set the vision and align all teams toward achieving it! I noticed each team was working solely to achieve their team plan without considering others nor the overall plan.

This created a big conflict between teams and weakened the spirit of the team." (Ali, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

"Creation and implementation of a vision would enhance resources for the betterment of the team and help individuals to accomplish professional

aspirations and development. However, in the absence of great leadership and clear vision, none of these could be achieved” (Majid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

The second theme emerged was the inspirational power of transformational leaders to motivate people to perform better. Transformational leaders have the ability to motivate and inspire their followers to boost their performance. They establish an enthusiastic work environment and drive organisation with changes and innovations. As employees are working through self-motivation, this approach would particularly increase the level of productivity and efficiency:

“For me, I do not need a leader to teach me how to do my job because I have over 20 years rather I look at the leader as inspirational spirit that encourage me to perform better and provide better results. If you ask anyone in operations directorate about the current director, they will tell you about his ability to inspire every member in the team and he has the charisma to promote enthusiasm among team member! Although I am better than him technically, but he is much better than me in motivating people and that is the big difference between me and him.” (Haitham, Entry-Level Leadership, Downstream Division).

“He has strong ability to motivate their followers to rise above their own self-interest, and establish high standards of performance...Take for example, Khalfan, the deputy CEO, many employees agreed that, he is charismatic leader and has strong ability to motivate employees. Before becoming deputy CEO, I got the opportunity to work under him directly.

He was encouraging new ideas and always looking for new approaches to improve individuals and department performance. As a result, we received the team of the year prize twice for outstanding performance.

Although, he did ask us to stay late but it was ok with us to work extra hours and do extra tasks without being asked to do so...” (Ahmed, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Hamood shared another common thought shared by other participants in describing the advantage of the transformational leadership. It is also mentioned in the literature (Northouse, 2018) which is the advantage or the strengths of the extensive research in the field of the transformational leadership:

“I am working in the training and development department, and part of work is to organise leadership courses for the parent company and its subsidiaries. While searching and reading about different theories in leadership styles, I found that transformational leadership has been studied extensively in the west and there is much solid evidence for its effectiveness. This is one of reasons we included it in the development plan for leaders.” (Hamood, Middle &Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

“As I am a member in the organisational development team, we are receiving many proposals and advertisements from various vendors for leadership development program. Every vendor has its own model of leadership curriculum. For instance, I remember we decided to conduct the training internally and we requested for proposals from different vendors. It was difficult for us to decide which program to select. Therefore, I decided to spend days and hours to read in the literature and build a solid background of the latest research in the leadership filed. I found transformational leadership was one of the theories in the top list and some vendors created their own models using the Bass model and supported with assessment tools. On the other hand, some vendors just built their models by selecting one piece from each theory and put them together!

So, it was easier to filter and decide which offer to consider.” (Suleiman, Middle &Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division)

The fourth strength based on the interviewees' view of transformational leadership is a process between leader and follower rather than an exchange between two individuals. Several leadership models are built primarily on the exchange of rewards to achieve the desired outcomes. However, transformational leadership expanded the view of leadership which includes not solely the exchange of rewards, but additionally leaders' attention to the vital needs of growth and development for followers.

"I believe as a leader, one of my main responsibilities is to enhance the learning curve of all my subordinates. I totally agree with one of the scholars, sorry I do not remember his name, who said money is not key motivator to retain employees. For example, I know as a company, our packages are less attractive than for example Oxy or BP, but we are very strong in learning and development areas. In the last two years, I did not receive any resignation letter although I knew several individuals got attractive offers from Oxy and BP, but they rejected the offer. Three of them approached me directly and stated clearly one of the top reasons keeping them here is the development and growth opportunities." (Samiyah, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

This is supported by a story shared by one of the employee who moved from a highly paid company to an average pay scheme:

"I used to work with one of the famous companies here in Oman and their packages were competitive. However, I felt it was just built based on give and take approach only. I discussed this issue several times with my manager and HR team but unfortunately, employees' development program was not a top priority for them. I was still in the beginning of my career and yes, I had the required skills. However, the world is not constant, and technologies keep changing. Thus, unless you keep learning, you will find yourself outdated and you do not have the required skills. In other word, your market value will decrease because you get paid for what you bring to the market place. Consequently, if you do not have the required skills you will lose your value.

I moved here before 2 years and I am not exaggerating if I tell you what I have learned here so far greater than what I learned there for 5 years!" (Abdullah, Employee, Downstream Division).

Finally, yet importantly, a number of participants who are holding leadership roles mentioned the great strengths of transformational leadership in focusing on followers' values and morals. Transformational leadership attempts to elevate individuals to higher level of moral responsibility. Transformational leaders encourage followers to transcend their own self-interests for the interests of the whole team or community or organisation.

This was mentioned previously by Avolio, Bass, et al. (2004), 'transformational leadership is primarily moral uplifting'.

This is a great contribution to transformational leadership and makes it unique in considering the moral dimension. Accordingly, the coercive use of power by such leaders who uses their self-interests is not considered as a form of transformational leadership. Although a number of articles discussed and assessed the ethical dimension of transformational leadership, there are very limited empirical researches on employees' ethical behaviour as an outcome of transformational leadership (Effelsberg, Solga, & Gurt, 2014).

"You know! Leadership topic is one my favourites and I love reading about it to understand it deeply. However, it is not sufficient for me to read about it purely, but I would prefer to link it with other fields such as politics and sociology. I noticed most of western theories in leadership did not give enough attention to the ethical and moral dimension except in the new theories like authentic and transformational leadership. Even transformational leadership was criticised previously because bad leaders can be transformational until recently when they differentiated between a true transformational leadership and what he called 'Pseudo transformational leadership'. I do not remember the author, but he even supported it with examples like Gandhi for true transformational leader versus Hitler who was a bad example for transformational leadership. And that fascinated me because he considered the ethics dimension while explaining the model." (Azzan, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

"If you ask me what is the best thing, I learned from Hamood, the current Human Resources manager? My answer is to give priority to team interests more than self-interests. I can give many examples for that but one of the recent examples happened last week. Due to budget constraints because of the oil prices, attending conference was only authorised for managers and above. He had to select either to attend the CIPD conferences in UK or a local conference organised by Oman Society of Human Resources. We knew that, he liked CIPD conferences and it was one of his rights as a manager to attend it. However, he submitted a proposal to the corporate director to attend the local conference, and the assigned travel cost will be used for other two-team

members to attend the local conference. Honestly, it was a great lesson for us to consider team interests rather than self-interests.” (Ahmed, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream sector)

5.3.5.2 The Weaknesses of the transformational leadership

Based on the interviewees' accounts, five main weaknesses were highlighted and mentioned in various forms. The first one was that, transformational leaders may miss out on details because they are not always detail-oriented. Creating vision and planning long term is a key attribute of transformational leadership. The transformation leaders write a long-term vision and they share with it with all employees to work together to achieve this vision. They tend to look toward the big picture at all times and they have magnificent ideas to attain bizarre dreams. However, the process can cause a number of leaders to become obsessed on the end result instead of analyzing the details required to achieve the ultimate goal. They have a tendency to leave out vital details out of the picture. This can lead to downfall of the whole plan if there is no assistant with the leader in tackling all aspects of the long- term plan. Hence, it is crucial for the transformational leader to have a deputy who focuses on detail in order to balance out the working of the team:

“Many people are fascinated with the phrase ‘look at the big picture’ but the problem is they forget that the big picture consists of small pictures and unless they are aligned properly, the big picture will look ugly. In my current role, I have to dig down and read all the details to ensure all plans and tactics are aligned before circulation.

For example, Hamed, the current director, is a great leader and we are all proud to work with him but one of his weaknesses and mentioned by him several times is he is not a detail-oriented person. Therefore, he gave me a clear direction to dive deep while reading the business plan and KPIs to minimise the risk of losing important information.” (Nada, Entry-Level Leadership, Upstream Division).

The second theme which emerged was the possibility of abuse of power. Transformational leadership has several advantages, which make it not only

attractive but also feasible to adopt. Though there is much robust evidence of its successes which has catapulted many firms to great heights, this is only possible if the leader works for the common interest. If the leader is self-serving and only employs others to attain his/her personal targets in the name of transformation, then they are obviously abusing their power:

“One of my problems with the transformational leader or any other style of leadership is that, their followers admire them, and they look up to the leader as a role model. Hence, if the leader makes unethical or immoral judgments and decisions, those under them will experience a collective blow.” (Suleiman, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

“Since transformational leaders can stimulate the minds of their followers, they can also make their employees agree and support their plans without questioning. With the authority, power and confidence given to those leaders, you will see cases where leaders can make ruthless and unexpected decisions out of emotions, which can be damaging to the people. And since these leaders are believable and have the charisma to seduce others, decisions that are not in the best interests of the majority can be carried out even if they have harmful implications.” (Zakiya, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

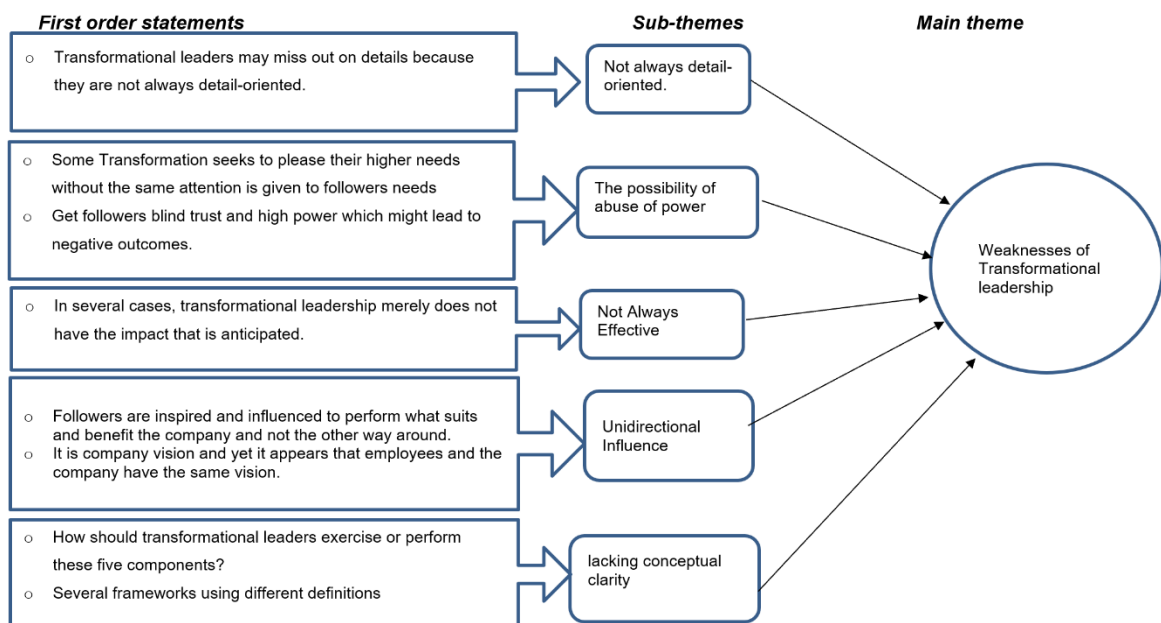


Figure 5.4 Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders outshine at identifying the existing needs or demands of their potential followers. Since these leaders are naturally equipped with this skill, some of them seek to strengthen their leadership position by exploiting their followers to stay productive. This occurs when the transformation seeks to please their higher needs without giving the same attention for their followers needs. If the followers discover their leader's real agenda, it causes distraction for the team and organisation which decrease productivity levels:

"It happened with us previously, the ex-CEO was charming and one of the inspirational leaders who motivate you to excel your performance and to work extra-mile. He was dealing with us informally, laughing, and chatting with everyone including the teaboy. I worked under his supervision for more than 3 years and I never questioned his decisions or agenda. However, after the oil prices crisis, the government started to investigate all oil and gas contracts and he was involved directly with several illegal and unethical trades! Honestly, it was a big shock for all of us and I learned a great lesson to avoid putting my full trust in a leader." (Khalid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

Another theme which emerged was that, transformational leadership is not always effective. In several cases, transformational leadership merely does not have the impact that is anticipated. This was mentioned in a study conducted in China where the leaders were requested to evaluate their employees' creativity, whereas the employees were requested to evaluate their own positive affect (tendency to see the world positively) and their leader's leadership style. The outcome was transformational leadership did not significantly predict creativity in employees who already were motivated and positive (Gilmore, Hu, Wei, Tetrick, & Zaccaro, 2013). This was mentioned by four participants holding leadership positions and some of these are cited below:

"Based on my experience, I saw different styles of leadership and sometimes within the same business unit. I saw three or five styles demonstrated by various leaders so what style you will follow sometimes might depend where are you in the organisation? Or what are the project needs and at which stage

the project is right now? Also, what type of people in your team? In my pervious role, I had two senior advisers reporting to me and all of them were very experienced, motivated and they knew the details of the business plan. They were not looking for someone to inspire them or to show them the vision because they knew it very well, but they were looking for delegation. Hence, we agreed on the KPIs and I left them alone and I was impressed honestly with the outcomes. What I want to say, sometimes people get impressed with the charismatic leaders or transformational leadership or others but sometimes it is not always effective as expected". (Isaaq, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Upstream Division)

Honestly, I think sometimes transformational leadership is over-exaggerated especially if read in the leadership literature or if you attend one of leadership seminars. They give you the impression like it is the only model for effective leadership. Personally, I was ranked low in transformational leadership questionnaire but, I always receive a high ranking in delivering results. Additionally, last year I got many requests from many employees who showed interest to work under my supervision although I was joking and telling them HR ranked me low in leadership..." (Majid, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

"Transformational leadership style has its advantages, and it works in several organisations and the outcomes are amazing. Nevertheless, there are also disadvantages for every style which should be considered before you decide which style to practice. Hence, identifying the organisations' needs, and understanding your subordinates' personalities are the two top priorities to focus on when I take over any leadership role. In some cases, I find transformational leadership style is not effective because the project nature and the team members are in a stage where I need to apply the basic management functions." (Yaqoob, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

The fourth theme which appeared was the unidirectional influence of the transformational leadership. In companies where transformational leadership style

is exercised, followers are inspired and influenced to perform what suits and benefits the company and not the other way around. In fact, the only one, which is prevailing, is the company itself and yet it appears that employees and the company have the same vision. This can be a form of deception because there is only unidirectional influence, which is from the leader to the followers. This was mentioned by several participants from across all levels and the passages below elucidate this view.

“One of the drawbacks of transformational leadership in my opinion is that it appears like there is mutual benefits for both the company and the employees, but we know for a fact that in most cases the company interests come first, and employees’ interests might be the least. The leader persistently stimulates and motivates the employees to contribute to the development of the organisation. While this may look like no problem at all on first glance, however this type of system does little benefit to the employees themselves. There is only one direction of influence – from the leader to the employees, and only one element, which benefits from this approach – the company itself. This case may look so obvious for the employees and they may start to disconnect from the organisation. Also, this leaves a small area for a personal development even though it may not always seem like it.” (Samiyah, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Midstream Division).

“You know! I think the real challenge is that the employees or the followers of a persuasive and charismatic leader can be convinced and made to achieve the vision of their leader even if it is deceptive and without merit to them. So, if the leader has bad plans, employees might be deceived and be enticed to follow with whatever decisions the leader makes.” (Idrees, Entry-Level Leadership, Midstream Division).

Last but not least, the model of transformational leadership is criticised as lacking in ‘conceptual clarity’ because it includes wide ranges (Northouse, 2018) which in its turn leads to vagueness in assessing and explaining the effectiveness of transformational leadership. The five components of transformational leadership as upheld by Bass have a fundamental overlap (Rickards, 2012). Specifically, the writers on transformational leadership use the terms ‘inspirational motivation’, ‘inspirational leadership’, ‘idealised influence’ and ‘charisma’ and ‘charismatic

leadership' loosely to refer to a composite latent construct of transformational leadership (Yukl, 1999). On the other hand, MacKenzie, Podsakoff, and Jarvis (2005) argued, these five components should not to be used interchangeably and are conceptually different. They continue to claim that it is not unusual to imagine a leader who is able to exhibit consideration to followers but is not able to show a sense of power and confidence (e.g., exhibit-idealised influence). This example however represents a slightly different conceptualisation of transformational leadership, leaving the question remaining: how should transformational leaders exercise or perform these five components? Though Bass refers to these five components as vital to transformational behaviour, he did not explain how transformational leaders can make use of the five components. Therefore, as noted by Yukl (1999), the ambiguity in defining the five components of transformational leadership and their employment creates doubts about their construct validity. Several participants who work in human resources as in the following quote highlighted the challenge of selecting or defining one model for transformational leadership:

"Before two years, there was an initiative to run an executive leadership programme for oil and gas companies in Oman. As a company, we took the initiative to look for the appropriate the programme and to pay half of the cost. I asked training team to contact different institutes and universities to submit their proposals. Transformational leadership was one of the main topics in the curriculum. However, there was no unity or agreement among the course providers on the components, the framework and measurement tools of transformational leadership." (Yousuf, Middle & Top-level Leadership, Downstream Division).

"I think transformational leadership is great theory, but the challenge is it includes several traits and behaviours which make it difficult to understand or define. For instance, transactional leadership focus on one aspect so it is clear and the same thing if you read about Participative leadership, but

transformational leadership has four or five components and overlaps with other theories.” (Ali, Middle & Senior-level Leadership, Upstream Division).

In summary, as with any form of leadership, there are strengths and weaknesses of transformational leadership which must be scrutinised. While transformational leaders do stimulate and inspire higher levels of trust and respect, there must also be an absolute belief in the rightness of the vision being pursued. If a transformational leader loses faith, so does the rest of their followers.

5.3.6 Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Data

This study examined the current understanding of political skill in non-western countries and then provided clarifications from a developmental viewpoint. More specifically, previous studies of political skill investigated the concept frequently by means of statistical analysis, while in the current research it was investigated not only statistically but also by eliciting insights into how political skill develops for managers. It also has provided a refinement to the existing political skill models illustrated in the literature. Based on Study Two findings, the refinement model consists of political awareness, developing networks and relationships, building alignment, versatile influence and authenticity. This refinement proposes that the nature and dimensionality of political skill are closely dependent upon the level of managerial status. More specifically, compared to the political skill model developed by (Ferris et al., 2005) on non-managerial samples, the current findings suggested ‘building alignment’ as an additional dimension for leadership role. Thus, the addition of ‘building alignment’ to the other elements of the refinement model is a major finding from this study.

A second finding relates to a study employing a sample of very senior managers, conducted by Hartley et al. (2007) which proposed that ‘strategic scanning and direction’ should constitute a dimension of political skill essentially related to the strategic management of the organisation. Nevertheless, this dimension was not identified in the current research. These overlaps and differences suggest that political skill needs to be comprehended as they are related to job level in the organisation. As such, the current research illuminated the aspects of political skill which are particularly related to middle management roles.

Another finding of this study was to emphasise the significance of authenticity as a vital ingredient of skilled political action. This finding adds depth of insight into the nature of political skill dimensions proposed by Ferris and collaborators (2007).

Though Ferris and collaborators claimed that apparent or perceived genuineness was a dimension of political skill, the current research findings reveal that, from the perspective of managers as political actors, what matters when engaging in politics are personal feelings of authenticity and genuineness, rather than external perceptions of these.

Additionally, Study Two contributes to the understanding of organisational politics in a way that is more balanced than the existing negative views of organisation politics. Specifically, the current research revealed that organisational politics can manifest itself as positive political behaviours, for example, establishing and using relationships, observing and interpreting the decision-making context and building personal credibility. Nevertheless, the participants described a wide range of devious, manipulative and self-interested political behaviours which resulted in substantial negative effects such as individual frustration, loss of focus on organisational objectives, higher intention to leave and reduced productivity. Thus, measures or scales in organisational politics studies need to accommodate both positive and negative views of organisational politics and not to focus on the negative perspectives only.

Furthermore, as with any form of leadership, there are strengths and weaknesses of transformational leadership which must be scrutinised. Although, Study One indicated that transformational leadership is practiced in OGS in Oman, the advantages and disadvantages of transformational leadership were clarified in Study two. For example, several participants emphasised that transformational leadership style was not effective in short-term projects which were restricted by tight deadlines and rigid instructions to follow. Moreover, while transformational leaders do stimulate and inspire higher levels of trust and respect, there must also be an absolute belief in the rightness of the vision being pursued. If a transformational leader loses faith, so do the rest of their followers.

CHAPTER SIX: GENERAL DISCUSSION

6.1 Overview

Upon completion of the Study One and Study Two data analyses, the researcher integrates both findings in this chapter to answer the research questions applying a systematic approach. The discussion chapter aims to elucidate and interpret the outcomes of both studies, answer the research questions, and integrate the findings to provide a better picture of the interrelation across leadership style, organisational politics and employees' performance. This chapter begins with a list of the research objectives, followed by the research questions and the chosen method to answer each question. After that, the researcher discusses and interprets the significance of the findings of each question individually in light of what was already known about the research gaps and the emerged insights as a result of this study.

This research aims to investigate the interrelation across transformational/ transactional leadership style, organisation politics and employees' performance in the oil and gas sector (OGS) in Oman.

In order to achieve the research's aim and objectives, a mixed methods approach was followed to collect data from diverse sources to provide better understanding of the interrelation across the three areas namely, leadership style, organisational politics, and employees' performance. The researcher started with the quantitative study first to measure the level of each construct and test the relationship among them, followed by the qualitative study to explore individuals' experience of transformational leadership and organisational politics. Table 6.1 below illustrates the research objectives and the employed method to answer each question. The researcher employed sequential design starting with the quantitative approach followed by the qualitative approach.

Table 6.1 *Research Objective and the Employed Approach*

Research Question	Method
1. To evaluate whether transformational leadership style is practiced in the management of OGS employees	Quantitative
2. To investigate the level of organisational politics, namely the perceptions of organisational politics (POP) and leader political skill (LPS);	Quantitative
3. To examine the relationships across TTLS, LPS, POP, in-role performance and OCB;	Quantitative
4. To achieve an in-depth insight of employees' experience of organisational politics;	Qualitative
5. To scrutinise the applicability of transformational relationship and analyse its strengths and weaknesses in managing employees in the OGS, Oman.	Qualitative

In the following sections, the researcher discusses the findings of both studies related to each objective and highlights the similarities and the new findings compared to the previous studies. More specifically, the main focus in the first three objectives are to measure the level of each construct and the type of correlations across all constructs namely, the transformational leadership style, the transactional leadership style, passive avoidance style, perceptions of organisational politics, leader's political skill, and the two forms of employees' performance, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviours. Then, the researcher moves to the next level to understand the details of the relationship.

6.2 The Perceptions of Participants toward the Transformational Leadership

To meet the first objective in this research, the researcher employed the full range of leadership model which focuses on three types of leadership styles namely, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire style (Bass & Bass, 2009). According to the literature, there is a contention concerning the applicability of transformational leadership in the Arabic countries due to small number of studies conducted to measure transformational leadership style generally and the Full Range of Leadership styles specifically. Another consideration could be the unique culture of the Arabic countries, which are classified as high-power distance which make transformational leadership difficult for employees to accept. The literature specifies that cultural orientation has an influence on how transformational leadership will be perceived and received by followers, highlighting the possible culture-sensitive nature of transformational leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2005). Therefore, the first step involved the researcher using Bass's Full Range of Leadership Model to test the application of transformational leadership and extended the analysis to include the other two styles of leadership specifically, transactional leadership and passive/avoidance style.

The first element of the model is the transformational leadership, which consists of five components namely, idealised influence-attributes, idealised influence-behaviours, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Based on the employees' evaluations, all the five components were practiced and scored even higher than the components of transactional leadership style. The findings are different from the previous study on leadership styles in Oman which indicated that employees in high power distance cultures had lower levels of transformational leadership (Common, 2011). However, a number of scholars suggested that several characteristics of collectivistic cultures (e.g., sharing mutual accountability for goal achievement and stressing on shared interdependence) may be prerequisites for facilitating the exercising of transformational leadership (Jung, Bass, & Sosik, 1995). Based on Study One findings, Omani leaders and employees took the responsibility to pursue the team's goals more than individual's goals and probably becoming more engaged in their jobs to accomplish company goals.

From a different perspective, the qualitative approach in Study Two supported the findings in Study One and provided examples of some of the behaviours practiced by managers in OGS. Below, are some of the examples mentioned by both employees and leaders related to the behaviours and characteristics of transformational leadership (Avolio, Bass, et al., 2004).

The four components of transformational leadership were mentioned by participants and they shared examples and stories to support their understanding of each component as explained below.

- Idealised influence (idealised attributes and idealised behaviours): Several managers in senior roles in the OGS in Oman attempted to be role models for others with a strong sense of purpose, vision, principles, values, and trust and considered the moral and ethical consequences of decisions;
- Inspirational motivation: Several participants shared stories about the way their leaders inspired them and how such managers made a difference to developing team spirit and collaboration among team members;
- Intellectual stimulation: Several managers and employees used and repeated the phrase 'Thinking outside the box' to highlight some of creative ideas implemented to improve workplace environment and solve problems
- Individual consideration: Some participants highlighted the key role played by their managers to boost their learning curve. Additionally, they spoke about the allocated time spent by their leaders to transfer knowledge or teach a certain skill.

Furthermore, based on the Study Two outcomes, part of training and development department responsibility is to collaborate with other department leaders to develop a succession plan for every employee in the company. Part of this plan includes a list of the potential leaders, called 'emergent leaders', who can be developed to take leadership role in future. Emergent leaders are enrolled in several leadership programmes internally and externally to prepare them for leadership roles before they are assigned officially. In addition to that, all four companies collaborate together to conduct leadership courses annually for the senior leadership in collaboration with highly ranked business school and institutions in the world such as Harvard business school, London Business School, HEC Paris and Boston Group.

According to Alsaeedi and Male (2013), transformational leadership programmes have become popular in the Middle East as a result of regional focus on development and change.

Additionally, another reason appeared in Study Two findings which was highlighted by several managers in middle level and senior levels of the organisation structure. Several managers stressed the importance of involving followers in formulating strategy to achieve a common goal.

Part of the great initiatives in OGS started in 2011 when a number of oil and gas companies encouraged employees to participate in formulating company strategy and to share new ideas to develop shared goals. This is in line with transformational leadership philosophy to develop a shared vision and stimulate creativity to achieve the desired vision (Bass & Bass, 2009).

Based on the aforementioned findings, several participants who work in the oil and gas companies believe that there is an equal power distribution in the company; a high-power distance culture is limited in their organisations. More specifically, at least in the study, this finding suggests that some participants no longer perceive that their organisational culture has hierarchical, vertical, and unequal power distribution. While there might be other companies in the other sectors which still have a high-power distance culture, the companies involved in the current research appear to have a horizontal culture to a certain degree, compared to Hofstede's previous view that Omani society has a very high-power distance culture. Hence, it may not be rational to uniformly classify oil and gas companies' cultural traits as having high power distance orientation.

Moreover, a number of participants believed that inspiring a shared vision was applicable in oil and gas companies; this was in line with Hofstede's findings (Hofstede, 2011) on the collectivist nature of Omani culture, and recognised by the fact that both stakeholder groups felt that group meetings were a crucial component in creating a shared vision. As such, having a shared vision appeared to be vital part of the transformational model, and highly applicable to the OGS environment.

The second leadership style in the full range of leadership style was the transactional leadership which was also practiced more in middle level managerial positions. Several managers exercised both transactional and transformational leadership, aligning with Bass and Avolio's (2000) affirmation that the two models are not mutually exclusive.

For passive/avoidant leadership, the findings indicated that both targeted groups believed that leaders infrequently demonstrated the passive/avoidant leadership style. The findings also revealed a non-significant difference in the evaluation between employees and leaders' perceptions toward passive/avoidant leadership. Accordingly, it can be concluded that, based on the respondents' perceptions, leaders in OGS in Oman were more likely to exhibit transformational leadership style and transactional leadership behaviours than passive/avoidant leadership.

This is in line with several studies conducted in the West (Nguni et al., 2006; Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007) but does provide different outcomes compared to study conducted in public sector in United Arab Emirates (Litz & Scott, 2017) which found transactional leadership was slightly more practiced than transformational leadership style. The difference might be first, due to the difference between the nature of public and private sectors and second the difference between Education sector and Oil and Gas sector.

On one hand, the researcher's findings have echoed previous studies in themes of transformational leadership attributes and behaviours. For instance, Andersen, Bjørnholt, Bro, and Holm-Petersen (2018)'s explanation of transformational leadership results can be achieved by employing charisma, inspirational leadership, individual attention, idealism and intellectual stimulation. The results also support Olu-Abiodun and Abiodun (2017) who found that successful leaders focused on sharing organisation vision, created teams and provided support for their followers. On the other hand, the differences are in the methods or tactics used by transformational leaders in practicing transformational leadership components. These differences are sometimes due to the cultural settings or organisational cultures.

For instance, some participants believed that inspiring a shared vision was applicable in Oman; which is consistent with Hofstede's findings (Hofstede, 2011) on the collectivist nature of Arabic culture, and recognised by the fact that both employees and managers felt that group meetings were an important element in creating a shared vision. Specifically, having a shared vision is deemed to be a vital component of the transformational model, and highly applicable and adapted in the OGS. Moreover, in enabling others to act, several leaders showed their openness to ideas and suggestions, although they did not accept ownership of some decisions. Correspondingly, a number of employees felt uncomfortable approaching their direct leaders with ideas, as this may be discouraged in top-down, hierarchical organisational structures. Hence, as the change process commences, it might be more suitable to employ a transactional style in this domain and then progressively transition into transformational leadership approaches.

The literature findings on the gender and age perceptions to transformational leadership were inconsistent. Several studies conducted in the West have shown that there were gender and age differences existing in the employees' perception of exerting the transformational leadership (Van Engen & Willemssen, 2004). On the other hand, a number of studies conducted in the Middle East (Aboshaiqah et al., 2014) showed no difference in both age and gender perceptions towards transformational leadership. The researcher tested the correlations of both variables if their perceptions differed towards transformational leadership and both gender and age were not significant determinants of perceptions of transformational leadership.

In the existing research, the researcher found professional development, delegation, accountability were examples of actions which enabled leaders to challenge the process. This was consistent with several studies on transformational leadership; but it was an inadequate within this dimension. Moreover, leaders stimulated employees' hearts by recognising successes through celebrations, parties and ceremonies, and leaders and employees' accounts aligned in this aspect in spite of employees feeling that their leaders could do more.

Furthermore, based on the literature, a number of studies (Litz & Scott, 2017; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007) revealed that transformational and transactional leadership are mutually exclusive.

However, in the current research, the findings indicated both styles were positively correlated and comprised complementary rather than polar constructs. This suggests that a given manager may be practicing both transformational and transactional as indicated by several managers in Study Two. This is in line with Bass's (1985) argument that optimally effective leaders engage in both types of behaviours and they were more of a continuum, rather than two separate entities.

In summation, managers in the OGS exercised both transactional and transformational leadership, aligning with Bass and Avolio (2000)'s assertion that the two styles were not mutually exclusive. The findings have shown that transformational leadership is practiced in Arabic Countries, but adaptations to the style are sensible for the best impact and results. Among the three styles, transformational leadership was found the most exercised style, followed by transactional style, and finally passive avoidance style. This variation may have resulted from the employees' cultural value orientation as suggested by Jung and Yammarino (2001) who claimed that transformational leadership had more potential to emerge in a collectivist culture than in an individualistic culture.

6.3 The Perceptions of Participants towards Organisational Politics

The second research objective focuses on two main constructs of organisational politics namely, the perceptions of organisational politics (POP), and leader political skill (LPS). Both constructs have been studied intensively in Western countries but unfortunately, to the best of the researcher knowledge, there have been few studies conducted in Arabic countries discussing both constructs. In this section, the author discusses the findings of Study One and Study Two related to POP and LPS.

Since both constructs have not been used or tested in Arabic countries, the researcher started to measure the level of POP using the available scale developed by Ferris (2000) who defined POP as an individual's subjective judgement of the extent to which the worksite environment is characterised as self-serving of specific individuals and groups, at the cost of other individuals or groups or the organisation.

Part of the challenge in using Ferris scale was its assumption based on the negative side of politics. However, several individuals in Study Two mentioned that politics could be used to achieve positive as well negative results and limiting it to the negative side could compromise the meaning of politics in a way which makes it less understandable.

Based on Study One findings, downstream division scored the highest level followed by the midstream and finally the upstream. However, Study One provided limited understanding of the reasons behind the high level of POP in the OGS. According to Adams et al. (2002), the use of a quantitative method is inadequate to capture the diverse subjective meanings and interpretations that individuals may attribute to politics in their organisational interactions, and instead note that qualitative methods such as thematic analysis, might provide researchers with the ability to analyse different individual conceptualisations of politics. Hence, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews in Study Two to identify the reasons and understand individuals' perceptions towards organisational politics.

The high level of POP has different causes as clarified by several participants in Study Two. Specifically, a number of employees believe that development and promotions opportunities such as training, salary adjustment, promotions are limited to certain individuals in the organisation and the only way to receive such benefits is to establish a strong network with those individuals. Hence, when career chances are thought to be restricted to certain individuals, employees may tend to participate in political behaviours. According to Daskin and Arasli (2011), employees tend to exhibit more political behaviours when they believe playing political games are successful strategies to maximise their benefits from the restricted pool of opportunities.

Furthermore, the participants were asked several questions about their perceptions towards organisational politics and the answers shared several similarities with Ferris (2002) definitions of organisational politics. For example, several participants provided examples of "self-interests" and the way it was used to increase personal gains at cost of others. Nevertheless, there were some examples shared where "self-interests" were used to benefit the individual and the organisation as well.

Adam Smith, the father of modern economics, illustrated that the best economic benefit for all can usually be achieved when individuals act in their own self-interest. While the above definition focused on individual's agenda or actions to achieve self-interests, a number of participants highlighted also the key role of coalitions of people where sometimes individual behaviour was driven by coalition. The alignment of interest groups' resources, coalitions can gain relative power, and it was through this power which organisation as a whole got affected. Certain individuals in the coalition may offer benefits or threats to persuade others to join. As such, differences in power among actual and potential coalition members are important, in determining both who becomes a member of the coalition and, after the coalition forms, who has the most influence in identifying strategies, and agendas.

The participants shared the most common behaviours in the OGS in Oman such as political behaviour, impression management, influence tactics, self-presentation, interpersonal influence in which an individual was aiming to enhance his/her image in the eyes of others to form a positive judgement. The aforementioned examples of behaviours were viewed as an independent construct and differed from each other. For instance, socially astute individuals used more positive influence tactics than impression management tactics in the workplace. This could impact the broader work environment, making it more pleasant than one with individuals using negative influence tactics. On the other hand, several scholars deemed the similarities among these constructs as outweighing the differences (Gerald & Darren, 2011).

From another perspective, part of Study One findings, the existing scales to measure POP construct was originally developed based on Ferries and his colleagues (1989), and it focused mostly on the negative side of the politics and neglected the positive side. However, the scale should capture the positive side as well or at least provide neutral definition of POP because what makes perceptions of politics positive or negative is not that the workplace behaviour is or is not political, but that the outcomes of the political behaviour are the root of the positive - negative distinction. For example, the Maslyn, Fedor, Farmer, and Bettenhausen (2005) study revealed that positive politics were directly associated with positive organisational outcomes such as satisfaction while negative perceptions of politics were inversely associated with these outcomes.

The second construct which belongs to organisational politics is political skill. Specifically, the researcher focused on leader's political skill and how followers perceived their leaders in terms of political skill. Although perceptions of organisational politics and leader's political skill are considered under the same umbrella, 'organisational politics', many individuals and scholars view political skill as an essential skill for leader to survive in organisation.

Furthermore, based on Study Two outcomes, several individuals emphasised the point of working with influential people within the organisation which was rated as the most important situation for the use of political skills. Also, the other areas in which leaders viewed political skills as a crucial skill was in thinking about how public opinion had an influence on their organisation, dealing with different organisations, local government and influencing regulation in their sector.

Finally, although gender, age, and job level were not within the scope of this study, the researcher also tested the correlations of all three variables to check whether their perceptions differed significantly towards organisational politics. Several studies conducted in the west have shown that there are some differences existing in the employees' perception of exerting the organisational politics (Ferris et al., 2002; Podsakoff et al., 2000). Nevertheless, in the existing research, gender, age, and job level did not have an effect on perceptions of organisational politics. A similar finding was also demonstrated by another study conducted in Israel (Vigoda, 2000).

6.4 The Interrelations across leadership styles, Organisational Politics and Employees' Performance

The third research objective focused on advancing knowledge about the interrelationship across leadership style, organisational politics and employees' performance. It sought to expand them in light of suggestions by Ammeter et al. (2002) to develop a political theory of leadership. Specifically, the study examined perceptions of organisational politics and leaders' political skill with leadership style and employees' performance in non-western country to minimise the gap in the literature (Ammeter et al., 2002; Cacciattolo, 2015).

In the light of the above studies, the researcher started to test the relationship between leadership styles and the three forms of employees' performance, followed by testing the relationship between leadership styles and organisational politics and finally the relationship between organisational politics and employees' performance.

6.4.1 The Leadership Styles and Employees' Performance

The literature revealed the significance of leadership behaviours in boosting employees' performance (Wang et al., 2011). Specifically, several research studies have inspected the relationship between the Full Range of Leadership model and several forms of employees' performance in a wide variety of settings (Bass & Riggio, 2006). In Study One, the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' performance was found stronger than any other styles in the Full Range of Leadership model based on both leaders' and employees' perspectives. The results were in line with the findings reported by several researchers which have demonstrated the positive correlation between transformational leadership and employees' performance. According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leaders encourage their followers to question out-dated operating procedures and develop new and practical methods to overcome work challenges and boost performance. Reuvers, Van Engen, Vinkenbure, and Wilson-Evered (2008) highlighted that some of transformational leadership behaviours such as vision, support for creativity, encouragement, autonomy, and recognition were closely matched with the determinants of creativity and innovation in the workplace.

Furthermore, the findings of prior studies about the relationship among the components of transformational leadership and the three forms of performance of leadership were mixed. A few studies (e.g., While Reuvers, Van Engen, Vinkenbure, and Wilson-Evered, 2008) found a positive relationship of all components of transformational leadership and the three forms of performance. However, a number of studies found either non-significant or negative relationship among some of the components of transformational leadership and the three forms of performance (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Rich, 2001).

In Study One, the researcher found a positive relationship among the components of transformational leadership and the three forms of performance.

Cheung and Wong (2011) found that the transformational leaders provided more discretion to act and more support for individual initiatives (Bass, 1985) and gave enhanced feelings of responsibility (Zhou & Oldham, 2001) as well as emphasising the importance of followers' contribution of ideas for building organisational success (Vera & Crossan, 2004). The results of the study also showed that employees were willing to go the extra mile if they received adequate support from leaders.

The aforementioned findings have brought further insights to support the results in the literature between transformational leadership and employees' performance in non-western countries (Cavazotte, Moreno, & Bernardo, 2013). Indeed, there were several studies which have inspected the relationships among transformational and transactional leadership and employees' performance. However, very few employed mixed methods or multiple methods using multiple sources (Wang et al., 2011). Thus, the value of this study is that it provides results using two distinct approaches to give the reader a comprehensive picture of the interaction between the transformational leadership and three forms of employees' performance. It employed a survey method first to test the relationship followed by interviews aimed at understanding the nature of the relationship in non-western work context. The qualitative interview method assisted in understanding the details of this relationship. For example, based on the Study Two outcomes, some participants illustrated that one of the challenges they faced under transactional leadership style was the unavailability of a creative environment and sometimes they were requested to focus on the key tasks only and following the same procedures. According to Bass et al. (2003), transformational leaders mainly stimulate follower creativity by creating an environment which encourages followers' creativity to perform beyond expectations. In Arab countries, Politis (2004) tested the association among transformational and transactional leadership and the 'stimulant' and 'obstacle' elements of the work environment for creativity in several companies which are based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in telecommunication technology. The existing research has revealed that transformational leadership had stronger relationships compared with transactional leadership with the 'stimulant' determinants in building an organisation culture and work environment which encourages employees' creativity and encourage them to perform extra-duties.

Obviously, the outcomes of the current research support the effectiveness of transformational leadership in advancing employees' performance over a transactional leadership style. Nevertheless, Bass and Riggio (2006) highlighted that there is nothing wrong with transactional leadership. It can, in most instances, be quite effective and this was pointed out by a number of leaders in Study Two. The results of this study indicate another important point which is that transformational leadership does not substitute transactional leadership and each style might be more appropriate than the other depending on the situations and problems. Transformational leadership supports transactional leadership in accomplishing the goals of the leader, employees, team, and organisation. Accordingly, the leader may exhibit transformational leadership style in certain situation while exhibiting transactional in others as it depends on the situation. That is, in certain situations the time is suitable for transformational leadership, while in other situations being transformational may not be appropriate. Hence, the results of the current study add further support to Bass's augmentation model.

The findings of the current research have demonstrated that a positive correlation exists between both transformational and transactional leadership and employees' performance, whilst a negative correlation exists between passive/avoidant leadership and employees' performance. Both of these correlations have been confirmed in this study. According to Study Two, a number of participants highlighted that, their leaders encouraged them to rise above their own self-interest, helped them to become more creative, paid attention to followers' needs and established high standards of performance. Last but not least, this research supports the Bass (1995) augmentation model, where Bass argues that transformational leadership supplements transactional and that they are not mutually exclusive.

6.4.2 The Leadership Styles and Organisational Politics

The literature on political leadership (Bass & Bass, 2009; Valenty & Feldman, 2002; Vigoda, 2000) and the literature on organisational politics including political skill, political behaviour, and perceptions of politics (Ferris et al., 2005; Kapoutsis et al., 2011; Lux, Ferris, Brouer, Laird, & Summers, 2008) are extensive. However, theoretical work and empirical research at the intersection of leadership and organisational politics is rather new and limited (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2016).

Starting with the political skill, the findings revealed that leader political skill is positively correlated with followers' perceptions of their leaders' transformational leadership. These findings support the proposition made in earlier studies which highlighted that political skill benefits not only leadership emergence (e.g. Ewen, Wihler, Blickle, Oerder, Ellen, et al., 2013) but also leadership effectiveness (e.g. Snell, Tonidandel, Braddy, and Fleenor, 2014). The two-studies analysis indicated that politically skilled leaders had the potential both to persuade their subordinates to follow the leader's articulated vision and to offer individualised support, which ensured that their leadership was viewed as more transformational. With high commitment to the articulated common vision and personalised support from their transformational leaders, the followers had higher productivity. This result also revealed that the intra-psychic components of political skill can make exceptional contributions to perceptions of transformational leadership. It appears that in the OGS sample, political skill instils leaders with the ability to comprehend their environment and those within it and this is what can be utilised to promote a compelling vision, understand follower requirements and develop a safe, risk taking environment.

The findings also have shown that exhibited behavioural flexibility (interpersonal influence) impacts both leader intellectual stimulation and charisma and simply because politically skilled leaders have interpersonal influence, they are flexible and can provide individualised and growth-related support. Additionally, they can successfully practice a wide array of persuasion tactics to sell their vision as well as inspire followers to be innovative and take risks.

Furthermore, apparent sincerity, or the ability to appear genuine and trustworthy would increase the perceptions of leader charisma and intellectual stimulation similar to individualist cultures, such as the UK or USA (Ewen, Wihler, Blickle, Oerder, Ellen III, et al., 2013).

The second element of organisational politics discussed in the existing study is the perceptions of organisational politics. The results demonstrated a positive relationship between transactional leadership, and the perception of organisational politics whereas a negative relationship was found between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of organisational politics. It supported the idea that a transformational leader whose influence derives from his/her high levels of professionalism and personal integrity can create an environment of innovation, involvement, satisfaction, trust, commitment in the organisation.

On the other hand, a transactional leader whose influence derives from his/her position of authority and his/her ability to use rewards and punishments will succeed in his/her occupation in a more limited way (Ehrhart, 2004). Additionally, is the theoretical idea that transactional behaviours may produce a more negative impact on employees than has been formerly recognised in the literature. Accordingly, to minimise the gap in the literature, the researcher emphasised on the examples provided by the participants in relation between transactional leadership and organisational politics. The outcomes revealed that sometimes transactional-style behaviours are perceived by the employees as opportunistic and undesirable. For example, a number of transactional leaders dedicate a great deal of effort to acquire negotiating skills. However, their negotiating skills sometimes left the members of the team in ambiguous and uncertain conditions hence raising negative perceptions about politics in organisation. These findings support Bass and Avolio's (1993) argument which is that the effective leader should demonstrate a bit of *laissez-faire*, a moderate level of transactional leadership, and a high level of transformational leadership. This combination of leadership styles will fortify the leader's ability to influence his/her followers and catalyse them to perform tasks above and beyond what is expected (i.e. OCBs). Last but not least, the negative relationship between perceptions of organisational politics and the in-role performance level and OCB, supports Mintzberg's (1973) argument that organisational politics left unchecked could harm employees' performance as will be discussed in the next section.

6.4.3 Organisational Politics and Employees' Performance

Part of the scope of Study One was to test the relationship between the leader's political skill and employees' performance. Although similar studies were conducted in the western context to attain a similar goal, few studies have been conducted in Arabic countries which vary in terms of culture and traditions. The findings reveal that leader political skill is positively related to the three forms of employees' performance namely task performance, OCB-I, and OCB-O. This result is consistent with findings of previous studies (Kapoutsis et al., 2011).

In this case, political skill should be considered as one of those key skills which is vital to leadership effectiveness. More specifically, a study found that the most prominent reason that leaders' careers "derailed" was due to a lack of social skills or interpersonal (Van Velsor & Leslie, 1995). Moreover, Liu et al. (2011) argued that effective leaders were distinguished more by exhibiting higher-level of political skill than by cognitive abilities.

The results of this research contribute to the body of literature in a number of ways. Although, the political skill construct has been debated for about three decades as a potentially imperative characteristic in employee performance and career progression (e.g., Mintzberg, 1983), such deliberations were conducted merely at the conceptual level, and limited efforts have been made to examine political skill in different contexts such as Arabic countries. Hence, these outcomes took the first step forward by empirically inspecting political skill and testing its role in leadership and employees' performance. In Study One, the findings indicated leader political skill played a significant role in facilitating individual performance which extended beyond mere empowerment of team members. The contributions of the current research should serve as stimulus for further studies in this largely untested domain.

The second aspect of organisational politics examined in this research was the individuals' perception towards organisational politics. The results showed the perceptions of organisational politics had negative correlations with all forms of employees' performance. The current research findings contribute to theories on organisational politics because the majority of empirical studies with a few exceptions (e.g., Ralston, Giacalone, & Terpstra, 1994; Romm&Drory, 1988; Vigoda, 2001) have been conducted in one cultural sphere (often the North American), without considering cultural differences (Chang, Rosen, & Levy, 2009). According to Hofstede (1980), cultural differences may impact on the mental routines which direct employees' reactions and perceptions to dissimilar facets of their jobs. Such cross-cultural differences make vital contribution to the possibility of the applicability and generalisability of theories linking political perceptions to employees' attitudes and behaviours (Chang et al., 2009).

Vigoda-Gadot and Drory (2006) argues that "organisational politics function as the silent enemy with organisations and causes more damage in the private sector than public sector ... silent effect of internal politics can spill over beyond the formal boundaries of organisations... to exercise lower level of performance" (204).

Therefore, employees may experience higher levels of organisational politics and respond with more passive behaviour like apathy or neglect, which are less risky (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). Study Two sheds a light on the negative effect of organisational politics such as demotivation, stress, intention to leave, and unsatisfied employees due to the internal politics of the organisation. These negative effects of internal politics may hamper both employees and company performance (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006).

According to these findings, OGS employees working in an environment rife with organisational politics will respond to such an environment by exhibiting apathy towards their job and neglecting their tasks. In addition to negatively impacting in-role performance, organisational politics has a negative correlation with OCB as well. In the private sector, this process has several implications beyond the performance level of the organisation and its employees.

Low levels of OCB in a company damage its ability to meet its targets, thereby undermining its competitive advantages, innovative practices, and ultimately the country economy which is heavily depending on the oil and gas sector.

6.4.4 Summary

Starting with leadership styles, the researcher found a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' performance in a number of areas. A positive relationship was found among transformational, transactional leadership and the three forms of performance (in-role performance, OCB-I and OCB-O). This interesting finding supports the Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, and Chen (2005) study but contradicts that of the Vigoda-Gadot and Drory (2006) study which found a more negative relationship between transactional leadership and OCB. A conceivable elucidation for this finding may derive from the special characteristics of the organisation where the data was gathered. More specifically, the Wang et al. (2005) study was conducted using data from private sector where there is a continuous demand for excellent performance whereas in the Vigoda-Gadot and Drory (2006) study, the data was collected from public sector. In such a system, strong transactional leadership may not result in the best performance level and instead, transformational leadership is much more effective. Thus, before drawing broader conclusions, this relationship should be tested in other types of organisations in different contexts.

The relationship varies in organisational politics. Precisely, there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and leader's political skill. Nevertheless, there is a strong negative relationship between transformational leadership and perceptions of organisational politics. The reason for that, is that several participants highlighted in Study Two, the negative impressions of employees toward organisational politics but, employees tend have a positive impression toward leader political skill.

The results of this research contribute to the body of literature in a number of ways. Although, the political skill construct has been debated for about three decades as a potentially imperative characteristic in employee performance and career progression (e.g., Mintzberg, 1983), such deliberations were conducted merely at the conceptual level, and limited efforts have been made to examine political skill in different contexts such as in Arabic countries. According to Liu et al. (2011), Unfortunately, little is known about how leader political skill and employees' performance in non-western countries. Additionally, several existing studies in

political skill (Gerald & Darren, 2011; Liu et al., 2011) found inconsistent relationships between leader's political skill and all forms of employees' performance. Hence, the outcomes of the current study took the first step forward by empirically inspecting political skill and testing its role in leadership and employees' performance in the context of a non-western country. In Study One, the findings indicated that leader political skill had a positive relationship with individual performance. The contributions of the current research should serve as a stimulus for further studies in this largely under-researched domain.

The second aspect of organisational politics examined in this research was the individual's perception of organisational politics. The results showed the perceptions of organisational politics had negative correlations with all forms of employees' performance. The current research findings contribute to theories on organisational politics because the majority of empirical studies with a few exceptions (e.g., Ralston, Giacalone, & Terpstra, 1994; Romm & Drory, 2006; Vigoda, 2007) have been conducted in one cultural sphere (often the North American), without considering cultural differences (Chang et al., 2009). According to Hofstede (1980), cultural differences may impact on the mental routines which direct employees' reactions and perceptions to dissimilar facets of their jobs. Such cross-cultural differences make vital contribution to the possibility of the applicability and generalisability of theories linking political perceptions to employees' attitudes and behaviours (Chang et al., 2009).

Last but not least, Vigoda-Gadot and Drory (2006) argue that "organisational politics function as the silent enemy with organisations and causes more damage in the private sector than public sector ... silent effect of internal politics can spill over beyond the formal boundaries of organisations... to exercise lower level of performance" (204). Therefore, employees may experience higher levels of organisational politics and respond with more passive behaviour like apathy or neglect, which are less risky (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). Study Two sheds a light on the negative effect of organisational politics such as demotivation, stress, intention to leave and unsatisfied employees due to the internal politics of the organisation. These negative effects of internal politics may hamper both employees' and company performance (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006).

According to these findings, OGS employees working in an environment rife with organisational politics will respond to such an environment by exhibiting apathy towards their job and neglecting their tasks. In addition to negatively impacting in-role performance, organisational politics has a negative correlation with OCB as well. In the private sector, this process has several implications beyond the performance level of the organisation and its employees.

Low levels of OCB in a company damages its ability to meet its targets, thereby undermining its competitive advantages, innovative practices and ultimately the country's economy which is heavily dependent on the oil and gas sector.

6.5 The Employees' Experience of Organisational Politics

After measuring the level of organisational politics and its interrelations with other constructs, the fourth objective provides the reader the personal experience of organisational politics in the eyes of employees.

The qualitative study provided rich insights into how organisational members perceived organisational politics in terms of how they defined it and described it in both positive and negative terms.

The use of qualitative approach is consistent with the calls for a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary organisational politics (Landells & Albrecht, 2015); the existing research recommends that traditional negatively framed definitions of organisational politics (e.g., Nye and Witt, 1993) need to be extended and expatiated.

In Study Two, the participants defined and interpreted organisational politics differently. More specific, the outcomes suggested five distinct lenses: reactive, reluctant, integrated, strategic, and hidden agenda. The extent to which organisational members engaged in individual political behaviour, as well as the perceived outcomes of organisational politics are determined based on the particular lens through which individuals viewed organisational politics. For instance, building relationships was differently perceived as 'brown-noser' (reactive), 'pandering' (reluctant), and 'working through other people' (integrated). Additionally, while several leaders see it as building relationships, so they can be called upon in the future (strategic), a number of leaders view it as an outcome of conflicting or hidden agendas in the workplace. Politics were viewed as an informal path to exercising

influence, therefore related to power dynamics in the workplace. Although politics were usually associated with game-playing and self-interest, they were equally considered as aspects of organisational life and a way of getting things done and thus achieving business objectives.

In general, though several researchers (Vigoda-Gadot & Drory, 2006) have previously recognised that individuals viewed organisational politics differently, the existing research study attempted to develop a broad level perspective in different context than western context.

The new perspective can expectantly be applied to assist organisations capture an understanding of baseline levels of organisational politics and to work as a framework for developing initiatives aimed at accomplishing more balanced, integrated and shared perspectives on organisational politics.

Another important finding of Study Two is that organisational members perceived organisational politics to have negative and positive outcomes at organisational and individual levels.

Participants who viewed politics using a reluctant or reactive lens depicted negative influences on the organisation for instance loss of focus on organisational objectives, lower productivity, tension, conflict, divisions, and vagueness. Additionally, participants characterised negative outcomes for individuals including increasing staff turnover, stress, and frustration. Several of these negative outcomes were also described in the western studies (e.g., Landells & Albrecht, 2013), although the focus on productivity — both decreased and increased organisational development — both supporting and obstructionist, affects concentration and increased frustration has not previously been revealed in a quantitative study.

Finally, participants who viewed politics through the integrated or strategic lens provided positive outcomes. The positive outcomes reported were relatively varied and encompassed organisational development, higher productivity, augmented communication, higher creativity, and career advancement. These positive outcomes have not been obviously captured in existing organisational politics studies.

In general, a crucial point was found also in the current study is that the most widely utilised models and measures of perceptions of organisational politics (POPS: Kacmar and Ferris, 1991; Hochwarter et al., 2003) are not capturing organisational politics as described and understood by numerous employees in different organisations. Thus, as detailed by Fedor and Maslyn (2002), when it comes to empirically examining both the negative and positive sides of politics in organisations, we solely measure one side due to the fact that the available scales reflect a primarily negative bias (e.g. Ferris and Kacmar, 1992). The results of the Study Two propose that a more balanced scale of organisational politics may capture both negative and positive outcomes for organisations and individuals.

While inadequate numbers of scholars have attempted to develop measures to capture both negative and positive politics perceptions, the measures have not been widely validated or accepted and the 'positive' items could reflect a more positive perspective (Fedor, Maslyn, Farmer, & Bettenhausen, 2008; Maslyn et al., 2005).

Given the positive facets of organisational politics, the evolving fields of positive organisational behaviour and positive organisational psychology offer possibly beneficial theories and frameworks to comprehend both the perceived functional and dysfunctional dimensions of organisational politics.

For instance, Crawford, LePine, and Rich (2010) proposed constructs like organisational politics could be considered as a challenge stressor as well as a demand stressor within Job Demands-Resources Theory (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). One of the outcomes of Study Two suggested that a number of organisational politics elements could be viewed as a resource (opportunity) and as a demand (threat), depending on the organisational context and individual experience that frames the lens through which individuals perceive their political climate. For example, the elements of ambiguity and uncertainty characterise a politically charged work environment which show the prevalence of self-serving and favouritism behaviours. It is necessary that employees are aware of others behaviour to safeguard their own status and reputations in the organisation where such norms characterise the work environments.

6.5.1 The concept of political skill

According to the literature, political skill is one of the key constructs in organisational politics field. Although the concept of political skill is a well-studied and established concept and has been formulated and discussed since 1981 in several western-countries, unfortunately it has not been studied in the Arabic countries. Part of the current research aimed to determine what represents skilled political engagement from the participants' perspectives. Additionally, this research makes additional contribution to the organisational politics domain by investigating further the political skill concept in non-western countries. Following on Study Two findings, five key dimensions emerged as critical to political skill. These findings share some similarities found in other political skill models as will be highlighted below.

6.5.1.1 Dimensions of Political Skill Based on Participants' View

The first dimension of political skill described by participants was the political awareness. It refers to the ability to diagnose and comprehend the political landscape.

Political awareness requires one to identify group and individual motives, conflicting agendas, to recognise the informal power web and main stakeholders. This dimension has been mentioned in the literature under different names or shapes. For instance, Baddeley and James (1987) proposed 'reading' as one of the two main facets describing skilled political behaviour.

Ferris et al. (2005) identified 'social astuteness' as the first dimension of the Political Skill Inventory which was used in Study One of the current research. Likewise, Hartley and Fletcher (2008) used 'reading people and situations' as one of the five dimensions of political skill, which is built on interpersonal and personal skills in understanding the sophistications of the political landscape. Although this dimension is logical in its nature and basically focuses on the ability of the individual to diagnose or grasp the political landscape, the other four dimensions focus on individual's ability to function actively within this landscape and could thus be defined as political engagement skills.

Building networks and relationships was the second dimension of political skill, which focuses on the capability to purposely develop strong interpersonal relationships and social networks to employ it as a tool for accomplishing company goals and navigating organisational processes. Establishing strong connections and having allies are imperative for developing and practicing influence.

Hartley and Fletcher (2008) referred to this dimension while describing the importance of interpersonal skills in their political skill model. Furthermore, Ferris et al. (2007) suggested that networking ability was a vital facet of political skill and powerful marketing approach to achieving and sustaining a success story in the organisation. The current research supports the argument that leaders view building strong networks as a method of understanding the political landscape and accessing the available resources in the organisation. In addition, the current research demonstrated the interdependencies between multiple dimensions of political skill such as building network and political awareness is significance.

The third dimension of political skill was creating alignment, especially in leadership roles. This dimension fundamentally necessitates the ability to spot competing agendas to define mutual ground in the plurality of interests at stake.

Alignment played important role in matrix structure, where participants were asked to alleviate competing loyalties and to attain goals by depending on individuals whom they had no official authority.

According to Zanzi and O'Neill (2001), 'in a typical matrix structure, coordination and balance between product and function is achieved mainly by political means and negotiation' (p. 245). Creating alignment dimension also overlaps with what Hartley (2010) labelled as 'establishing alignment and alliances.'

Versatile influence emerged as the fourth dimension of political skill in Study Two. Influence assists leader to sell an idea or project, convince colleagues to provide resources and/or support or to ask others to engage in activity that they may not necessarily need or want to undertake. Nevertheless, participants continuously emphasised on the importance of effective influence to be 'versatile'. Politically skilled leaders were viewed to have the capability to acclimate their influence behaviour or strategy to different situations and individuals. More specific, they do

not believe on 'one size fits all' and are capable to determine the appropriate influence is required in a given context or with a given person.

They employ a number of persuasion tactics (i.e. logical/emotional appeal, direct/indirect) to maximise their winning opportunity.

In developing the political skill model, Baddeley and James (1987) highlighted that skilled political individuals adjusted their actions based on how they interpreted the political landscape. Additionally, while explaining interpersonal influence dimension in their political skill framework, Ferris et al. (2005) annotated, 'Individuals with high level of interpersonal influence have the ability to properly calibrating and adapting their behaviour to each situation to provoke particular responses from others.'

The last dimension which emerged and was also described by the participants was authenticity which was an important ingredient of political behaviour. Authenticity was commonly used based on the intersection between exhibited behaviours while engaging in politics and perceived intentions.

Furthermore, participants used various terms to describe authenticity such as honesty, sincerity and congruence with personal values and chosen interpersonal style.

Several employees from all companies spoke openly about the notion of 'authenticity', while leaders focused on 'being upfront' and 'transparency'. Several participants used the phrase, 'being true to oneself'.

Generally, the majority of participants emphasised the significance of 'doing the right thing' when involving in politics.

These remarks sound strongly similar with the scholastic definitions of authenticity. For instance, Roberts (2007a) defined it as 'the degree of congruence between internal values and external expressions' (p. 329). The concept of authenticity uttered by participants induces somewhat the concept of integrity in political behaviour, proposed by Roberts (2007b). Correspondingly, it is proportionate to a certain degree with the 'apparent sincerity' dimensions suggested by Ferris and others in the political skill inventory model. According to Ferris et al. (2007), politically skilled individuals manifested signs of integrity and genuineness, sincerity, and authenticity in front of others. According to the Study Two findings, leaders were not only worried about *being perceived* or perceiving others as authentic when engaging in politics only, but primarily with *feeling* authentic and confident when doing so. This

dimension provides support to the other dimensions. More specifically, it provides leaders with an inner compass as they attempt to build relationships and networks, to establish alignment or to exercise influence with versatility.

This last dimension of political skill identified in the current research nuances and extends prior frameworks of political skill by indicating that, from the perspective of leaders as political actors, a vital aspect of skilled political engagement lies not only in perceived genuineness, but additionally in felt authenticity. Last but not least, based on participants' descriptions of authenticity as a dimension of political skill, it also echoed in the writings of transformational and authentic leadership theories. According to Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May (2004), authentic leaders know who they are, what they believe and value, and they act upon those values and beliefs while transparently interacting with others.

In summation, the current research contributed to earlier frameworks of political skill. Meanwhile, there are several difference among the two frameworks of political skill presented by Ferris et al. (2007), Hartley and Fletcher (2008) and Study Two results.

More specifically, the current study mirrored somewhat the dimensions suggested by Ferris and his colleagues in the political skill inventory framework but adding 'establishing alignment' as a supplementary dimension.

Additionally, the findings resonated to some extent with all dimensions developed by Hartley and collaborators except the last dimension suggested by the authors, namely 'strategic direction and scanning'.

A reasonable elucidation for these variances can be linked to the leadership level at which these models were developed, either in the samples employed or in light of their conceptual objective or the work context. Ferris and collaborators, while developing their framework, were merely interested in political skill at work in general, and not predominantly with the nature of political skill in leadership positions.

Though several studies have found positive associations between political skill (employing PSI) and leadership style including the first study of the current research, a number of studies in this stream tested the role of political skill for employees at all levels. Additionally, based on Study One findings, there was a significant difference between employees' perceptions and leaders' perceptions toward political skill.

Therefore, the model and its scale were not developed to capture what is specific about political skill in leadership positions. On the other hand, Hartley and his colleagues have developed their model by employing a large sample of executives and senior leaders and were interested more in political skill *outside of* the organisation. As a result, strategic direction and scanning dimension was one of the main dimensions to gain political skill. Based on the authors' view, strategic direction and scanning focuses on how power dynamics outside the organisation can make different scenarios of possible future outcomes to the strategic aim of the organisation.

Although, the focus of the current research was not mainly on political skill as related to the senior leadership roles only, but also it emphasised on political engagement within the organisation and used a sample from different leadership levels in the four companies. Nevertheless, what the differences and the overlaps between the two frameworks suggest in the view of other authors and the current study findings is that the nature of political skill is relative to leadership roles.

Although the capability to establish alignment across teams, sections, and individuals is fundamental for entry-level and middle-level of leadership and debatably less imperative among non-leaders, strategic direction and scanning is a political skill which is required mainly for senior leadership levels.

By positioning the outcomes of the current research within the existing literature on political skill, this research emphasises on the fact that the description and dimensionality of political skill are thoroughly dependent on the job level and should be inspected as such.

Based on this perspective, the outcomes of Study Two refine the concept of political skill and its dimensions in a way which is relevant particularly for different leadership levels.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this research also provide comprehension to the nature of political skill dimensions employed in the political skill scale, the most extensively used conceptualisation of political skill in the organisational behaviour field. Specifically, the model has been tested in different contexts and provided a dynamic understanding of leadership political skill by testing it in a different culture within the context of a broader political process.

6.6 The Strengths and Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership in the Oil and Gas Sector in Oman

Recently, there has been a plethora of attention by scholars, researchers and professionals toward understanding the dimensions of transformational leadership and its applicability. More specifically, several academics and decision-makers focused on the model developed by Bass and Avolio (1994) and believed it could boost employees' performance and satisfaction more than old-style of leadership such as transactional leadership and autocratic style (Riggio). Why? Because transformational leaders demonstrate positive expectations and believe that their followers can deliver beyond expectations. As a result, they inspire, stimulate and empower followers to exceed the average levels of performance.

Additionally, transformational leaders take followers needs and development seriously and several participants shared stories and examples when their leaders listen to their needs and follow up their developments. All the positive stories and examples shared by participants and mentioned in the literature describe transformational leadership as an effective leadership style.

However, Pauliené (2012) stated that in order to understand transformational leadership fully, the researcher needs to comprehend the context culture where transformational leadership is practiced.

In other words, despite the benefits attributed to transformational leadership, there are also numerous flaws viewed by critics supported by many academics and practitioners who found transactional leadership is more effective in several situations and in different contexts.

In this section, the researcher discusses both the strengths and weaknesses of applying transformational leadership in the OGS and based on Study Two's findings and the literature review. Transformational leadership, like any other styles, has its opportunities and constraints. Both strengths and drawbacks can be seen in various types of organisations from the public sector to the private sector, infinite spectrum between.

Burns (1978) revealed that transforming leaders are involved in the change process themselves, supporting others succeed. Bass (1985) argued that a transformational leader stimulates the follower to attain strategic objectives and suggested that transformational leaders exercise the following attributes to accomplish organisational goals: idealised influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Based on Study Two outcomes, the participants indicated that transformational leadership was a type of leadership possessing the ability to treat the root causes of the problem, encourage forward thinking, foster open communication, promote culture change and support cross-collaboration and continuous learning. The essence of these perceptions and convictions from the research participants is consistent with Bass's (1985) conceptual framework on transformational leadership, which was explained in Chapter two.

Schuh, Zhang, and Tian (2013) point out that a transformational leader can voice a compelling vision to inspire followers by showing the development opportunities for the followers and for organisation. Several participants described their leaders as 'big picture thinker' and shared a number of stories supporting their judgment.

However, while transformational leadership model has visionary and long-term planning benefits, several participants criticised it because it can leave details out of the picture which can have adverse results on the organisation.

It is easy to overlook key components that affect the overall success of the organisation but ignoring the 'nitty-gritty' may lead to bigger issues in the future. For example, several leaders who exercise transformational leadership style have a difficult time with detail orientation. Therefore, unless there is an assigned person who can handle nitty-gritty details or there is a back-up plan, organisations under a transformational leader might culminate in difficulties in the long run. This is where self-awareness as a leader is imperative because if the leader is just focusing on the big picture without giving enough attention to the details or assigning a team which can offset his/her lack of details ordination might lead to catastrophe in future.

Furthermore, transformational leaders, being inspirational and stimulators of change, are passionate to achieve a singular focus on their ideas and goal which is an effective way to communicate better with their followers and subordinates. Though this passion is motivating others, it can be blinding to other suggestions and

recommendation. It can also be a reason for them to disregard the real problems as well as the truth because a number of transformational leaders are the type of leaders who rely on enthusiasm and believe that goals can be accomplished if everyone is part of the movement, so to speak. These can be an obstruction for these leaders to investigate or look deeper into the situation. Several inspirational leaders have won over large groups of people with apparently “transformational” ideas (Yukl, 1999). Followers get caught up in this passion, believing the leader has the capability to create a big difference in their lives. However, a number of participants believe that the message of a transformational leader is not always a robust one.

It is vital that a leader not only bring team members into the fold on company activities but listen to their views as well and accept followers’ constructive criticism or engage the team in effective brainstorming meetings which aid innovation process better, and reduce the risk of not diagnosing the critical issues which might leads to failure.

In addition to above, Study Two findings reveal that although transformational leaders are visionaries and great influencers, this also is might backfire on organisation and followers later. Transformational leaders have the charisma to persuade people into making changes and following vision together as one for all. They are capable of inspiring and converting followers to believe in what they represent.

Though this style can be effective in attaining goals effortlessly with less or no objections by followers, this can have undesirable outcomes if the leader is immoral or is self-serving (Yukl, 1999). The followers of a charismatic and persuasive transformational leader can be made to achieve the vision of their leader even if this is illusory and without merit. Followers will still follow and believe the leader is leading them for the betterment of the organisation and its people and without questioning the pledge of the path where the leader leads them or the plans, he or she has for them. As stated by Noah (2018), there were several examples in the history of leaders who applied transformational leadership to achieve self-interests and which ultimately result in long-term costs for the nation and its citizens. Hence, if the leader has bad plans, followers might be deceived and be lured to follow with whatever

decisions the leader makes. Several study participants referred to a number of leaders in OGS who used to be characterised as 'transformational leaders' until the government authority found that a number of them were abusing the power and accepted bribes to maximise their self-gains. Bass (2008) described such examples applying the term pseudo-transformational leadership because they are seducing followers in name of transformational leadership to achieve their personal goals at the cost of others.

According to Tourish (2013), transformational leadership style stimulates employees engagement or followers commitment and has several other advantages but it is not always effective and there is a universal effective style can produce positive outcomes all the time.

Part of Study Two findings is that several leaders shared a number of situations during crises or short-term project when transformational leadership was not effective due to the nature of the situation at that time. Also, in some cases, employees view their leader as someone like them, so he/she might not be an effective motivator since followers will rely on their own perceptions instead.

During interviews, some employees appreciated the advantages of transformational leadership such as long-term planning, stimulating creativity, encouraging change and development, and making people feel inspired and enthusiastic.

These initiatives are magnificent and can boost company's performance. Albeit, this can be a drawback if subordinates are requested to work extra hours and motivated for the good of the organisation only and not the other way around.

As a matter of fact, few of them deemed that, the company is the only one which is gaining the whole benefits and yet it appears that employees and the company have the same vision. Therefore, this can be a form of deception since there is only unidirectional influence, from the leader to the follower. According to (Tourish, 2013), the leader has to illustrate to his/her followers their benefits of achieving the company vision and failing to do so might lead to low satisfaction level because they will feel that they are taken advantage of.

Last but not least, Walumbwa and Hartnell (2011) explained the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' performance and how certain

elements of transformational leadership such as idealised-influencer inspiring followers can play a role in improving performance. It was followed by Abbas et al. (2012), who found the dimensions of transformational leadership positively affect the four elements of employees' innovative performance behaviour including idea generation, idea promotion, work commitment, and idea implementation. According to Mokgolo, Modiba, and Mokgolo (2012), transformational leadership has a strong positive influence on followers' job performance and can work effectively in encouraging employees to achieve desired team outcomes. Cavazotte et al. (2013) stated that employees' relational identification with the manager and employee's self-efficacy beliefs can help with employee's higher levels of task performance. Several scholars and researchers (Masa'deh, Obeidat, & Tarhini, 2016; Mutahar, Rasli, & Al-Ghazali, 2015) tested the influence of both transformational and transactional leadership on company financial performance and they found transformational leadership had stronger affect than transactional leadership.

My findings on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' performance are congruent with the above body of knowledge which was discussed in chapter two.

The majority of the participants in Study One and Two indicated that they were inspired and stimulated to excel and perform better under the transformational leadership of their senior leader.

Several participants also shared their work stories about a specific dimension of transformational leadership when they felt inspired by the idealized influence of their transformational leader to work harder and delivered beyond expectations. Other participants indicated that the other dimensions of the transformational leadership at their organisation had assisted with their enhanced work performance.

Ghafoor et al. (2011) argued that transformational leaders' moral leadership behaviours correlated positively with task performance and OCB whereas authoritarian leadership behaviours related negatively to employees' both behaviours.

The outcomes of Study One and Study Two are in line with Bass's (1985) transformational leadership model and several previous studies. More specifically,

participants stated that they felt motivated and inspired to accomplish higher organisational goals under transformational leadership.

Participants exemplified transformational leadership as the leadership style which promotes organisational change and innovation, and encourage employee's growth and development.

Moreover, participants characterised transformational leaders' strengths in having the ability to take risks and think outside the box to initiate and sustain change at the entire organisational level. Schuh et al. (2013) also argued that transformational leaders not only could influence subordinates, but also could build attractive development opportunities for the organisation.

In general, the association between transformational leadership, organisational politics and employees' performance attracts much scientific and societal attention (Vandenabeele, 2014), it is valuable to supplement existing quantitative findings with qualitative data, because interviews contribute with in-depth knowledge about participants experience and views about the three constructs.

Based on the current study and previous studies, transformational leadership style is practiced in the OGS and play a vital role to achieve organisational vision compared to transactional style. While the current study supports the Bass (2008) argument that transformational leadership is a global style, it does not support the claim of Taya, Azizah, and Naglaa (2018) that there was a lack awareness for the concept of transformational leadership style in the Arabic countries.

Study One and Study Two showed that demonstrating the five I's as a basis to set future directions and establish performance indicators provides great benefits to the organisation. Leaders who exercise transformational leadership can raise the level of achievement and create strong impact through inspiring team members.

In addition to that, transformational leadership style has its own merits, and these have worked in most organisations in different cultures. Yet, there are also several disadvantages to consider while excising transformational leadership style. Identifying the advantages and disadvantages assists the shareholders, leadership teams and decision makers in determining if this is the leadership style which they need to consider while assigning individuals for leadership positions in achieving their goals.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 Overview

The current research has analysed the associations among leadership styles, employee performance and organisational politics using OGS as the research context. Testing the interrelations across the aforementioned constructs in different cultures and various industries was strongly encouraged by several researches and studies (Brouer et al., 2016; Gerald & Darren, 2011; Şahin et al., 2017) to minimise the gap in the literature. Hence, the current research strategy and methodology were designed in a way that points towards the achievement of the research objectives. The current research employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design where the quantitative data was collected and analysed first in Study One, followed by qualitative data collection in Study Two.

The current research found that the managers in the Oil and Gas Industry are exercising both transformational and transactional leadership style behaviours. Testing the relationship, the study confirms that there is an overall statistically significant relationship between managers' use of transformational and transactional leadership behaviours and employees' performance from both managers' and employees' perspectives. The findings revealed also a negative relationship between transformational leadership and employees' perceptions of organisational politics, whereas a positive relationship existed between transactional leadership and the perception of organisational politics. Furthermore, the findings indicated a negative relationship between the perceptions of organisational politics and organisational citizenship behaviour.

The current research also reveals that organisational members perceive organisational politics positively as well as negatively. Thus, organisational politics studies, models, and measures need to consider varying conceptualisations of organisational politics — both positive and negative conceptualisations.

In this chapter, the researcher presents the contribution to knowledge advancement, practical implementations, research limitations and personal reflection.

7.2 Contribution to Knowledge Advancement

The current research makes several important contributions to the academic literature. To begin with, Common (2011) claims that transformational leadership is absent in the private sector in Oman, but the current research has found that such leadership is exercised by many managers in the Oil and Gas industry in Oman. Although the relationship between leadership and employees' performance has been studied by several researchers in the Western countries, research on the impact of specific leadership styles, such as transformational and transactional leadership, on employees' performance is limited in Arabic countries (Wang et al., 2011). In response to the knowledge gap (limited research), the current research confirms that, there are positive associations among transformational and transactional leadership styles, and three forms of employees' performance (IRP, I-OCB and O-OCB). The current research has offered an apparent message that individual consideration and inspirational motivation are the most vital transformational leadership behaviours influencing employees' performance. Parallel to the field research, the current research minimises the existing gap in the Omani literature by enriching the understanding of the correlations among transformational leadership, transactional leadership and employees' performance.

The second contribution is that prior studies (e.g. Tabook, 2001; Al-Mandhri, 2003; AlHarmi, 2003; Al-Kalbany, 2007; and Common, 2011) confirm that the theme of leadership and its effects on employees' performance in the Omani context has received very little attention and needs a further and deeper investigation. By investigating the Omani researches, the current research concluded that most of those researchers inspected leadership and employees' performance either separately (for example, Tabook, 2001, and Al-Mandhri, 2003); employed a different leadership model to the full range of leadership (e.g. Al-Kalbany, 2007; Al-Asmi, 2008; and Mujtaba *et al.*, 2010); studied the creative process, not the behaviour (e.g. Al-Harmi, 2003) or were carried out in a specific field, for instance education (for example, Al-Mandhri, 2003, and Analoui et al., 2010). Thus, what sets the current research apart from others is that it intensively investigates the role of the Full Range of Leadership Model and its relation to employees' performance in the oil and gas industry in Oman.

Indeed, the current research widens the scope of investigation to include samples from several sectors such as up-stream, mid-stream and down-stream sectors.

The third contribution is that whilst the majority of studies in the literature were undertaken in the government sector, education and financial services sector, those researches raised the question of whether there is a relationship between the Full Range of Leadership Model and employees' performance in the other sectors. For example, according to Wart (2003), leaders in private sector organisations may adopt dissimilar behaviours compared with leaders in public sector organisations because these organisations afford their managers different amounts of discretion. Consequently, scholars such as Ackerley (2006) suggested that this relationship should be tested with different samples and different companies in private sector. Therefore, the strength of the current research is that the results add to a growing body of literature on the role of transformational leadership in enhancing employees' performance in the oil and gas industry, where organisational systems, regulations, and culture are different from other sectors.

Another contribution of the current research is that it investigates the relationship between leadership and performance in Omani culture. According to Jones et al. (2003), leadership styles differ among individuals as well as between cultures and countries. Dorfman and House (2004) argue that leadership studies in Oman are almost non-existent due to the inherent difficulty of conducting organisational research. Then, it was supported by Common (2011) who emphasised that there were few studies of the concept of leadership in the Arab Gulf states in general and in Oman in particular, and that the area needed more investigation. In fact, the vast majority of empirical studies on the effects of transformational leadership have been concentrated in Western countries rather than in, for example, the Arabic countries. Thus, the current research continues and expands this line of inquiry by examining the influence of transformational and transactional leadership on employees' performance in non-Western societies and cultures by exploring the Omani culture.

The results support Bass's claims (2008) about the universality of the transformational and transactional leadership paradigms across different nations and societies. Bass (2008) claimed that the same conception of phenomena and relationships can be observed in a wide range of organisations and cultures in various parts of the world. Therefore, transformational leadership can be taught to managers at all levels in a firm and can positively affect a firm's performance. It can be also used in hiring, selection, promotion, and training and development as it will be explained further in the practical implication section later.

Another contribution is related to organisational politics. First, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, although there are several studies in organisation politics in the western countries, there is a paucity of studies in organisational politics conducted in the Arabic countries generally and in Oman specifically which have different work culture and rituals compared to the western countries. It examined the current understanding of political skill in non-western countries and then provided clarifications from a developmental viewpoint. More specifically, previous studies of political skill investigated the concept frequently statistically, while in the current research it was investigated statistically and then brought insights into how political skill develops for managers. It also has provided a refinement to the existing political skill models illustrated in the literature. Based on Study Two findings, the refinement model consists of political awareness, developing networks and relationships, building alignment, versatile influence and authenticity. This refinement proposes that the nature and dimensionality of political skill are closely dependent upon the level of managerial status. More specifically, compared to the political skill model developed by (Ferris et al., 2005) on non-managerial samples, the current findings suggested 'building alignment' as an additional dimension for leadership role. Moreover, employing a sample of very senior managers, Hartley *et al.* (2007) proposed that 'strategic scanning and direction' constitute a dimension of political skill essentially related to the strategic management of the organisation, yet this dimension was not identified in the current research. These overlaps and differences suggest that political skill needs to be comprehended as related to job level in the organisation. As such, the current research illuminated the aspects of political skill which are particularly related to middle management roles.

Furthermore, by stressing the significance of authenticity as a vital ingredient of skilled political action, the findings add depth of insight into the nature of political skill dimensions proposed by Ferris and collaborators (2007).

Though Ferris and collaborators claimed that apparent or perceived genuineness was a dimension of political skill, the current research findings reveal that, from the perspective of managers as political actors, what matters when engaging in politics are personal feelings of authenticity and genuineness, rather than external perceptions of these.

Last but not least, the current research contributes to the understanding of organisational politics that is more balanced than the existing negative views of organisation politics. Specifically, the current research revealed that organisational politics can manifest itself as positive political behaviours for example establishing and using relationships, observing and interpreting the decision-making context, and building personal credibility. Alternatively, the participants described a wide range of devious, manipulative, and self-interested political behaviours which resulted in substantial negative effects such as individual frustration, loss of focus on organisational objectives, higher intention to leave, and reduced productivity. Thus, measures or scales in organisational politics studies need to accommodate both positive and negative views of organisational politics and not to focus on the negative perspectives only.

7.3 Practical Implications

The findings of the current research have a number of important implications for future practice. According to Yukl (2009), as the need for new leadership skills and competencies increases, leadership development programmes are becoming more imperative than ever before. Thus, the current research proposes that the oil and gas sector policy makers should design leadership training and development programmes for Omani managers to develop their transformational and transactional leadership behaviours. They should consider the distinction between existing practising managers who are already well experienced in management, and the type of training programmes designed to prepare and train prospective and aspiring managers.

Apparently, the existing practising managers need more training in transformational leadership behaviours, which will add to the already existing knowledge of transactional leadership.

On the other hand, prospective managers (or what the respondents called in the interviews “second line leaders”) would need extensive training in both transformational and transactional leadership behaviours. Training courses designed to develop transformational leadership regularly require that managers and their followers complete the MLQ questionnaire or similar tool to assess the leader’s particular strengths and weaknesses.

Taking the MLQ assists managers to identify areas in which they could develop their leadership. For instance, managers might learn that it would be valuable if they were more confident in communicating their objectives, or that they needed to be more tolerant of opposing standpoints and spend extra time cultivating subordinates. Another way to assess leader’s style is by asking managers to describe their own five-year career plans and their perceptions of the future directions for their companies which can be added as part of the training curriculum later. Working with leaders on vision statements is one way to assist them to boost their transformational leadership behaviour. Therefore, training programmes for aspiring managers should be designed systematically in the sense that they begin learning about transactional leadership behaviours first, followed by training in transformational leadership behaviours. It is worth mentioning that for such leadership training and development programmes to succeed, policy makers in the oil and gas sector should consider three significant issues: firstly, those types of programmes should build on clear long-term strategies and development plans aiming to enhance managers’ leadership skills and develop their abilities to reach their maximum performance potential.

An additional important aspect of training is coaching managers to demonstrate greater individual consideration and promote intellectual stimulation for their subordinates. Rafferty and Griffin (2004) found that this was particularly beneficial for lower-level managers in organisations. Additionally, it can be used in improving decision-making, quality initiatives, and reorganisations.

Secondly, the policy makers should introduce the leadership programmes concurrently with reward programmes, to encourage those managers to fully participate and receive benefits from such programmes.

Thirdly, leadership training and development programmes should be built on effective evaluation measurements.

Such programmes should link to the managers' performance appraisal and be one of the measurement elements in evaluating managers' performance so that managers will take them seriously. Besides that, passing those programmes should be one of the key requirements for promoting any employee on the management ladder. Consequently, the framework for leadership training and development programmes will be: future oriented, appropriately designed, supported with rewards and promotions, and have evaluation criteria.

Another implication arising from the research is that, according to the Study Two findings, the oil and gas organisations should review and improve several parts of their recruitments, such as promotions policies and procedures. The mechanisms and selection criteria for leadership positions should be reviewed and reassessed. More specifically, the criteria should be built to assess individuals' knowledge, work experience, and personal attitudes and behaviours. External assessors should be involved in the promotion process of the key leadership roles to maximise its validity.

Furthermore, the current research has revealed that it cannot be assumed when two people are speaking about 'organisational politics' that they are speaking about the same phenomenon. Specifically, Study Two indicated that there were four viewpoints about organisational politics namely, reactive, reluctant, strategic, and integrated. It is pivotal to understand each individual's viewpoint on organisational politics. Do they view it only at a distance as something to be evaded? Do they view it as a beneficial strategy? Is it central to their philosophy of work? Any discussion of organisational politics needs to begin with understanding each person's standpoint on organisational politics.

The findings of the current research demonstrate that individuals may advance through various stages of perspectives on organisational politics as their discernment of organisational politics matures. This leads to the proposal that organisations could implement initiatives which develop an understanding of the different viewpoints on organisational politics and potentially 'move' individuals from a 'reactive' or 'reluctant' perspective to a 'strategic' or even 'integrated' perspective.

Nevertheless, further research is required to identify whether one lens is more effective than the other and whether it leads to better individual and organisational outcomes and performance. Generally, organisations should evaluate the extent to which the varying perspectives exist in their organisations. These deeper meanings could lead to more profound understandings of the sorts of politics which are present within organisations. For instance, if many employees view politics through a 'reactive' lens and avoid politics, what insights does that offer about the individual needs as well as the politics within that organisation? Perceived politics may have some effects on individuals and organisations.

For example, negative individual and organisational consequences were frequently reported by individuals with a 'reactive' or 'reluctant' lens. Yet, positive individual and organisational consequences were frequently reported by individuals with a 'strategic' or 'integrated' lens. If politics is universal and appears to a lesser or greater extent in all organisations, maybe the lens on organisational politics is strongly associated with the negative outcomes. If this is the case, the most suitable intervention perhaps, is not to attempt to eradicate organisational politics; rather it could be to work with individuals to reform their standpoint on organisational politics.

In addition, a number of managers openly expressed their lack of preparation and support in handling organisational politics. It highlights a gap in preparing managers to deal with the political complexities of their organisations, which is stressed by other researchers in the field (Buchanan, 2008; Hartley, 2009). Though many management interventions in this field are currently geared towards improving managers' administrative skills, the current research findings indicate that more attention needs to be paid to nurturing political skills. Political skills are vital in managerial roles, yet it would be mistaken to assume that it can be developed like other managerial skills, given the contentious nature of organisational politics. It is implausible that individuals would refuse learning skills such as project management, yet it appears plausible that individuals may not necessarily be comfortable about developing their political skills (Ewen, Wihler, Blicke, Oerder, Ellen, et al., 2013). The current study highlights the importance of transformational leadership style and, when augmented by higher levels of political skills, leaders can be very influential in their organisations.

Given that both skills can be developed and acquired, courses geared toward the development of transformational leadership might be well advised to append corresponding training in political skill.

The current research suggests that the mindset with which individuals approach politics creates a major hindrance in the development of political skill. Accordingly, this necessitates practitioners to shift their attention from actual political behaviours and skills to attitudes and mindsets about politics.

Finally, understanding the advantages and disadvantages of transformational leadership improves its practical application. Leaders should identify the advantages and disadvantages of different leadership styles because these may affect organisational politics and ultimately, in-role performance and organisational citizenship behaviours.

7.4 Research Limitations

While the current research makes crucial contribution, as with any other research study, it had several limitations which need to be acknowledged. First, the scope was limited to oil and gas industry and exclude any organisation from other industries and public sector, in which the organisational policies and procedures may differ. Consequently, the research results cannot be generalised to other industries or the public sector. However, this limitation does not weaken the significance of the current research, and that is because the results of the current research substantiate the outcomes of most of the studies that investigate the relationship between leadership, organisational politics and employees' performance.

Second, although analyses provided support for the interrelationship across leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance, the current research design precluded the demonstration of any causal relationships. The current research was conducted in a cross-sectional manner, and the data were collected at the same time, hence the direction of causality of the relationships (if any) cannot be affirmed. An experimental or longitudinal design would have provided a more robust results of the hypothesised causal relationship, but such research in the organisational behaviour field is relatively limited (Lu, 2006).

Thirdly, since leadership styles and organisational politics remain controversial topics, the researcher attempted to interview a diverse range of individuals from different departments, ages, job levels. However, there might still be some participants in the current research who hold a strong view of leadership styles or organisational politics, whether positive or negative. It is conceivable that participants did not depict their complete perspectives or that they responded in a socially desirable way. The volume, diversity, and quality of the data proposed that this was not the case.

Finally, notwithstanding every effort to remain objective in the conduct and analysis of the qualitative data, it is possible that bias, on the part of the researcher, could have affected the interpretations and that other researchers would develop different themes, propose different categories and draw different conclusions. However, by adhering to established qualitative processes the researcher has attempted to analyse the data in a transparent, valid and replicable manner and to elucidate the analytical processes. Following the current approach has yielded a deeper understanding of leadership styles and organisational politics in the oil and gas industry in Oman.

7.5 Directions for the Future Studies

The findings of the current research pave the way for numerous future research opportunities, including both qualitative and quantitative studies. First, in Study One, the relationships are correlational in nature. Thus, conclusions cannot be drawn regarding the causal direction of the relationship among transformational leadership, organisational politics and employees' performance.

Second, the current research used self-reported data. While responding to the questions, respondents may have responded in a socially acceptable way and provided what they perceived to be the expected answers rather than revealing their true opinions and attitudes.

Third, the scope of the current research was limited to oil and gas industry and did not include any organisation in other industries or in public sector which have their own policies and procedures.

This might affect the generalisability of the findings to other organisational settings in the public sector or in other industries.

Fourth, future research might focus on the potential mediating/moderating variables such as psychological safety, employees' empowerment, intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, organisational culture, organisational performance, the availability of resources as these may play important roles and affecting the leadership-performance relationships. This would enable researchers to know the explanatory value of the mediating and moderating role of different variables in this relationship.

7.6 Personal Reflection and Research Journey

While the current study presented the end product of the doctoral journey, the journey itself has been a source of prodigious learning for me. Intellectually, my horizons expanded in several ways. Working in Human Resources, my focus was and remained on the individual. However, becoming conversant with literature in organisational behaviour throughout the PhD has enabled me to develop a better understanding of the bigger picture in which the individual operates (organisational processes, culture, etc). I particularly enjoyed reflecting on challenges and opportunities of leadership and organisational politics from a macro perspective. Furthermore, prior to the PhD, I had limited knowledge about quantitative and qualitative research methods. After employing both of them in my research, I found that each one has its own opportunities and constraints.

Despite being a messy, unpredictable and often overwhelming process, I progressively discovered that analysing and making sense of quantitative and qualitative data can be tremendously rewarding! Finally, while conducting the current study, I felt truly privileged to meet and speak to many participants from different ages, genders and career levels. In many ways, those conversations became for me a source of advice and an opportunity for personal reflection around the subject of leadership and organisational politics, which have unquestionably formed my own maturation journey.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical Approval



Research, Innovation and Academic
Engagement Ethical Approval Panel

Research Centres Support Team
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M5 4WT

T +44(0)161 295 7012

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2 May 2017

Dear Ibrahim,

RE: ETHICS APPLICATION SBSR1617-22 – The influence of leadership styles and organisational politics on employees' performance in the oil and gas sector in Oman

Based on the information that you provided, I am pleased to inform you that your application SBSR1617-22 has been approved.

If there are any changes to the project or its methodology, please inform the Panel as soon as possible by contacting SBS-ResearchEthics@salford.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Percy'.

Professor David F. Percy
Chair of the Staff and Postgraduate Research Ethics Panel
Salford Business School

Appendix B: Study One Questionnaire

University of Salford
Salford Business School

**Questionnaire about The Interrelations across
Leadership Styles, Organisational Politics, and
Employees' Performance in the Oil and Gas
Sector in Oman**

استبانة عن العلاقة بين القيادة والسياسة التنظيمية و أداء الموظفين في قطاع النفط والغاز في
سلطنة عمان

Ibrahim Al Busaidi

PhD student at the Salford Business School

Supervisor: Professor Kirk Chang

Dear Respondent,

My name is Ibrahim Al Busaidi, a PhD student at the University of Salford, Manchester, UK. I am inviting you to participate in a research study to investigate the interrelation among leadership styles, organisational politics and employees' performance in the oil and gas sector in Oman. I hope that, the results of the survey will be useful for exploring the comprehensive relationship across leadership style, organisational politics and employees' performance. The findings of this study will be used for academic purposes and to propose some recommendations for the oil and gas companies to enhance staff performance through better understanding of leadership styles and organisational politics.

Given your portfolio; you have experienced the work in this sector for a period of time. I believe you will add a lot to this research by providing your experience and perspectives.

Filling out this survey will not compromise your privacy or subject you to any known risks. No identifiers are included in the questionnaires. The information in the study will be kept strictly confidential and data will be stored securely. If you would like to have a copy of survey results, you will have to provide your name and address by sending email me.

I would greatly appreciate your completing the survey.

The survey should take you about 15 minutes to complete. Because a relatively small number of people are being surveyed, your response is very important.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort!

Sincerely,

Ibrahim Al Busaidi

PhD student at the Salford Business School

i.s.a.albusaidi@edu.salford.ac.uk

إخواني وأخواتي الأعزاء:

اسمي إبراهيم بن سالم البوسعيدى، طالب دكتوراه في جامعة سالفورد في مانشستر بالملكة المتحدة. أود أن أدعوك للمشاركة في تعبئة الاستبيان التالي والذي يدرس تأثير أنماط القيادة والسياسة التنظيمية على أداء الموظفين في قطاع النفط والغاز. نتائج هذه الدراسة ستكون قيمة للمجال الأكاديمي وفي تقديم بعض التوصيات التي تساهم في تنمية أداء الموظفين في هذا القطاع وذلك من خلال فهم أعمق لتأثير أنماط القيادة والسياسة التنظيمية. بالنظر إلى خبرتك وتجربتك في هذا القطاع، فإن مشاركتك في هذا الاستبيان ستثري هذه الدراسة بمشاركتنا خبراتك وانطباعاتك عن هذا المجال.

تعبئة هذا الاستبيان لن يكون له أية تأثير أو مخاطر عليك كون أن نتائج هذا الاستبيان ستكون سرية ولا تحمل أي معلومات شخصية عن المشاركين في الاستبيان وسيتم التعامل مع البيانات بحرص وسرية تامة.

يتطلب الاستبيان فترة وجيزة وقدرها 15 دقيقة لتعبئته كاملاً وسأكون ممتناً وشاكراً لك لو أعطينا رأيك كونك من القلة الذين تم انتقاؤهم لتعبئة هذا الاستبيان.

وتقبل مني كل الاحترام والتقدير،

مخلصكم/ إبراهيم بن سالم البوسعيدى

طالب دكتوراه بجامعة سالفورد

البريد الإلكتروني:

i.s.a.albusaidi@edu.salford.ac.uk

SECTION A: Demographic questions; (Please tick "X" to whichever applies):

1. Age	18 to 27	
	28 to 37	
	38 to 47	
	48 or above	

2. What is the highest qualification level you have completed?	Primary Education	
	Intermediate Education	
	Intermediate Education	
	Associate Degree	
	Bachelor's Degree	
	Master's Degree	
	Doctoral Degree	

3. Do you have employees reporting to you officially?	Yes	
	No	

SECTION B: Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership Styles

This section describes the leadership style of your manager as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. Please indicate your answer by selecting the number.

أعدت هذه الاستبانة لتصف نمط قيادة مديرك من وجهة نظرك. الرجاء تحديد مدى موافقتك على الجمل الوصفية التالية باختيار الرقم الموضح لإجابتك.

How frequently each statement fits your line manager?	Not at all	Once in a while	Sometimes	Fairly often	Frequently, if not always
ما مدى إظهار مديرك المباشر للسلوك القيادي المذكور؟	مطلقاً	نادراً	أحياناً	غالباً	دائماً

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts. يقدم لي المساعدة مقابل جهودي.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate. يعيد فحص أسس العمل الجوهرية للتأكد أنها مناسبة.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Fails to interfere until problems become serious. يخفق في التدخل لعلاج مشكلات العمل حتى تصبح المشكلات جادة.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards. يركز اهتمامه على المخالفات والأخطاء والاستثناءات والانحرافات عن المعايير	1	2	3	4	5
5	Avoids getting involved when important issues arise يتجنب التدخل عند ظهور قضايا مهمة.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Talks about his/her most important values and beliefs. يُفصح ويُعبّر عن أهم قيمه وقناعاته.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Is absent when needed. يكون غائباً عند الحاجة إليه.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems. يبحث عن وجهات نظر مختلفة عند حل المشاكل.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Talks optimistically about the future. يتحدث بتفاؤل عن المستقبل.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Instils pride in me for being associated with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

	يبحث في نفسي الفخر لأنني أعمل معه.					
11	Discusses in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets. يناقش بدقة كل فرد مسئول عن تحقيق أهداف العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Waits for things to go wrong before taking action. ينتظر حدوث الأخطاء قبل أن يبادر بتصحيحها.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished يتحدث بحماس عما يجب تحقيقه.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose. يؤكد على أهمية وجود شعور قوي تجاه الغايات المنشودة.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Spends time teaching and coaching. يقضي وقتاً في الإرشاد والتوجيه.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Makes clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved. يوضح المردود المتوقع أن يتلقاه الموظف عند تحقيق أهداف العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Shows that he/she is a firm believer in "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." يظهر بأنه يؤمن بفكرة " إن لم يكن مكسوراً، لا تصلحه" أي لا تُغير أي شيء.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Goes beyond self-interest for the good of the group. يُعطي مصلحة الجماعة أولوية على مصالحه الشخصية.	1	2	3	4	5

19	Treats me as an individual rather than just as a member of a group. يعاملني كفرد مستقل وليس مجرد عضو ضمن المجموعة.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Demonstrates that problems must become chronic before taking action. يُظهر بأن المشاكل يجب أن تصبح مزمنة قبل اتخاذ أي إجراء.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Acts in ways that builds my respect. يتصرف بطريقة تزيد من احترامي له.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Concentrates his/her full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures. يُركز جُل اهتمامه على التعامل مع الأخطاء والشكاوى والإخفاقات.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions. يأخذ في الاعتبار التبعات الأخلاقية عند اتخاذ القرار.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Keeps track of all mistakes. يحتفظ بسجل جميع الأخطاء.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Displays a sense of power and confidence. يُظهر بأن لديه إحساساً بالقوة والثقة.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Articulates a compelling vision of the future. يُقدم رؤية واضحة ومقنعة عن المستقبل.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Directs my attention toward failures to meet standards. يُوجه انتباهي نحو الفشل لأجل تلبية معايير وأنظمة العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Avoids making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5

	يتجنب اتخاذ قرارات.					
29	Considers me as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others. يعتبرني كفرد لدي احتياجات وقدرات وتطلعات خاصة بي تميزني عن الآخرين.	1	2	3	4	5
30	Gets me to look at problems from many different angles. يجعلني أنظر إلى المشاكل من عدة زوايا مختلفة.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Helps me to develop my strengths. يساعدني في تطوير نقاط قوتي.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments. يقترح طرق جديدة للنظر في كيفية إنجاز المهام.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Delays responding to urgent questions. يؤجل الرد على الأسئلة العاجلة.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission. يؤكد على أهمية وجود إحساس مشترك برسالة الشركة.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Expresses satisfaction when meet expectations. يعبر عن رضاه عندما يتم تحقيق الأعمال المتوقعة.	1	2	3	4	5
36	Expresses confidence that goals will be achieved. يظهر الثقة بأن الأهداف سوف تتحقق.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: Political Skill Inventory

This section describes the political skill of your manager as you perceive it. **Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements.** Please indicate your answer by selecting the number.

هذا القسم يصف مدى امتلاك مديرك المباشر للمهارات السياسية في العمل من وجهة نظرك. الرجاء تحديد مدى موافقتك على الجمل الوصفية التالية باختيار الرقم الموضح لإجابتك.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your line manager? الى أي مدى توافق أو تعارض الجمل الوصفية التالية في وصف مديرك المباشر؟		Strongly Disagree ← Strongly Agree لا أوافق بشدة أوافق بشدة				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	Spends a lot of time and effort at work networking with others. يقضي الكثير من الوقت والجهد في التواصل مع الآخرين في العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
2	At work, he/she knows a lot of important people and well connected. في العمل يعرف الكثير من الناس المهمين وذو علاقة وطيدة معهم.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Is good at using his/her connections and networks to make things happen at work. يستخدم علاقاته ومعارفه لأجل إنجاز أمور العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Has developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who can call on for support when really need to get things done. طور شبكة واسعة من زملاء العمل والاصحاب والذين يمكن الاعتماد عليهم لتقديم الدعم لإتمام العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Spends a lot of time at work developing connections with others.	1	2	3	4	5

	يقضي الكثير من الوقت في العمل لبناء علاقات مع البقية.					
6	Is good at building relationships with influential people at work. جيد في بناء علاقات مع الأشخاص المؤثرين في العمل.	1	2	3	4	5
7	It is important that people believe he/she sincere in what he says and does. يهتم كثيراً في أن يعتقد الناس فيه أنه مخلص في تنفيذ ما يقول أو يفعل	1	2	3	4	5
8	When communicating with others, he/she tries to be genuine in what he/she says and does. عندما يتواصل مع الآخرين يحرص على أن يكون صادقاً فيما يقول أو يفعل.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Tries to show a genuine interest in other people. يحاول أن يظهر اهتماماً حقيقياً في الآخرين	1	2	3	4	5
10	Always seem to instinctively know the right thing to say or do to influence others. دائماً يبدو عفويّاً في قول أو فعل الأمور الصحيحة للتأثير على الآخرين.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Has good intuition or savvy about how to present himself/herself to others. يمتلك حدس أو ذكاء في كيفية تقديم نفسه للآخرين.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others. يمتلك حساً جيداً في فهم دوافع الآخرين والأمور التي يخبئونها.	1	2	3	4	5

13	Pays close attention to people's facial expressions. يُركز على تعابير الوجه عند الآخرين.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Understands people very well. يفهم الناس جيداً	1	2	3	4	5
15	It is easy for him/her to develop good rapport with most people. من السهل لديه أن يبني علاقة جيدة مع معظم الناس.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Is able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me. لديه القدرة في جعل الناس من حوله يشعرون بأريحية.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Is able to communicate easily and effectively with others. لديه القدرة في التحدث بسهولة وفعالية مع الآخرين.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Is good at getting people to like him/her. جيد في جعل الناس يحبونه.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: Perception of Organisational Politics

This section describes the perception of organisational politics. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. Please indicate your answer by selecting the number.

هذا القسم يصف مدى الإدراك للسياسة التنظيمية في المؤسسة. الرجاء تحديد مدى موافقتك على الجمل الوصفية التالية باختيار الرقم الموضح لإجابتك.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the company you work for? الى أي مدى توافق أو تعارض الجمل الوصفية التالية في وصف المؤسسة التي تعمل بها؟		Strongly Disagree ← Strongly Agree لا أوافق بشدة أوافق بشدة				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	There is a lot of self-serving behaviour going on in my organisation	1	2	3	4	5

	توجد الكثير من سلوكيات خدمة المصلحة الشخصية في مؤسستي					
2	People do what is best for them, not what is best for the organisation الناس تفعل ما هو أفضل لهم وليس ما هو أفضل للشركة	1	2	3	4	5
3	People spend too much time sucking up to those who can help them الناس تقضي وقتاً كثيراً مع الفئة التي تستطيع مساعدتها	1	2	3	4	5
4	People are working behind the scenes to ensure that they get their piece of the pie الناس تعمل خلف الكواليس لضمان حصتها من المصالح	1	2	3	4	5
5	Many employees are trying to manoeuvre their way into the in group الكثير من الموظفين يحاولوا أن يمهّدوا طرق مصالحهم على شكل مجموعات	1	2	3	4	5
6	Individuals are stabbing each other in the back to look good in front of others الأشخاص يطعنوا بعضهم البعض لأجل أن يبدو جيدين أمام البقية	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: Employee Performance Scale

This is the last section which is a self-evaluation of your performance. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. Please indicate your answer by selecting the number.

هذا القسم عبارة عن تقييم لأدائك الشخصي في العمل. الرجاء تحديد مدى موافقتك على الجمل الوصفية التالية باختيار الرقم الموضح لإجابتك.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your work performance?	Strongly Disagree ↔ Strongly Agree				
	لا أوافق بشدة		أوافق بشدة		
	1	2	3	4	5

الى أي مدى توافق أو تعارض الجمل الوصفية التالية في وصف أدائك في العمل؟						
1	Adequately complete assigned duties. أؤدي المهام المسندة لي بشكل كاف	1	2	3	4	5
2	Fulfil responsibilities specified in job description. أنجز المسؤوليات المحددة في الوصف الوظيفي	1	2	3	4	5
3	Perform tasks that are expected of me. أؤدي المهام المتوقعة مني	1	2	3	4	5
4	Meet formal performance requirements of the job. أنجز متطلبات الاداء الرسمية لهذه الوظيفة	1	2	3	4	5
5	Engage in activities that will directly affect my performance evaluation. أشارك في الأنشطة التي تؤثر بشكل مباشر على تقييم أدائي	1	2	3	4	5
6	Neglect aspects of the job which I am obliged to perform. أهمل أجزاء من مهام العمل المسؤول عنها.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Fail to perform essential duties. أخفق في أداء المهام الأساسية للوظيفة	1	2	3	4	5
8	Help others who have been absent. أساعد الآخرين المتغييبين عن العمل	1	2	3	4	5
9	Help others who have heavy workloads. أساعد الآخرين الذين معهم حجم كبير من العمل	1	2	3	4	5
10	Assist supervisor with his/her work (when not asked). أساعد مديري في عمله حتى ولو لم يطلب ذلك	1	2	3	4	5
11	Take time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries.	1	2	3	4	5

	أقضي بعض الوقت لأستمع فيه لمشاكل ومخاوف زملائي في العمل					
12	Go out of way to help new employees. أشوق طريقي لمساعدة زملاء العمل الجدد	1	2	3	4	5
13	Take a personal interest in other employees. أأخذ مصالح شخصية عن طريق الآخرين	1	2	3	4	5
14	Pass along information to co-workers. أأشارك المعلومات مع زملائي في العمل	1	2	3	4	5
15	Attendance at work is above the norm. التزامي بالحضور في العمل أكثر من المعدل الطبيعي	1	2	3	4	5
16	Give advance notice when unable to come to work. أخبر مسؤولي بوقت مبكر إذا لم أستطع الحضور للعمل	1	2	3	4	5
17	Take undeserved work breaks. أأخذ قسطاً من الراحة الغير مستحق	1	2	3	4	5
18	Great deal of time spent with personal phone conversations. أقضي وقتاً كثيراً في محادثات الهاتف الشخصية	1	2	3	4	5
19	Complain about insignificant things at work. أشتكي من بعض الأمور الغير مؤثره في العمل	1	2	3	4	5
20	Conserve and protect organisational property. أحافظ وأحمي ممتلكات الشركة	1	2	3	4	5
21	Adhere to informal rules devised to maintain order. ألتزم بالقوانين الغير رسمية الموضوعة للحفاظ على النظام	1	2	3	4	5

You have completed all parts of the questionnaire...

Thank you for taking part in this research....

Appendix C: The Structure of the Questionnaire

Section	Area	Factors	Details	Item Number
A	Demographic Questions	Gender, Age, Educational qualification and Job level		1,2,3,4
B	Leadership styles	Transformational Leadership	Idealised Influence (Attributed)	10, 18, 21 & 25
			Idealised Influence (Behaviour)	6, 14, 23 & 34
			Inspirational Motivation	9,13, 26 & 36
			Intellectual Stimulation	2, 8, 30 & 32
			Individual Consideration	15, 19, 29 & 31
		Transactional Leadership	Contingent Reward	1, 11, 16 & 35
			Management-By-Exception (Active)	4, 22, 24 & 27
		Passive/Avoidant Leadership	Management-By-Exception (Passive)	3, 12, 17 & 20
			Laissez-Faire	5, 7, 28 & 33
C	Organisational Politics	Political Skill		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18
D		Perceptions of Organisational Politics		1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
E	Employee Performance	In-role Performance		1,2,3,4,5,6 (R) & 7 (R)
		Organisation Citizenship Behaviour-Individual		8,9,10,11,12, 13 (R), & 14
		Organisation Citizenship Behaviour-Organisation		15,16,17 (R),18 (R),19 (R),20 & 21

Appendix D: Pilot Interview Guide Feedback

1. Clarity of questions
2. Logics & flow of questions
3. Difficulty of the topics discussed
4. Type of support, clarification received from the researcher
5. Any Suggestions or comments?

Appendix E: Interview Questions

Section 1: General Questions

Job Title:

Education: Leadership & Total Experience in OGS:

Section 2: Leadership Questions

- 1) How would you describe your leadership style? Examples?
- 2) Can you please share a story about a time when you attempted to build trust and provide role modelling for your employees?
- 3) Can you please share a story about a time when you were willing to take personal risk?
- 4) Why do you apply this leadership style, do you think it works? Why/Why not?
- 5) What are the main weaknesses of practicing transformational leadership style? Examples?
- 6) What are the main strengths of practicing transformational leadership style? Examples?

Section 3: Organisational Politics

- 7) How would you define or describe organisational politics in your workplace? Examples?
- 8) From your work experience to date, how would you describe the features of a highly
- 9) How do you react when faced with politics? examples?
- 10) What do you see as the outcomes or consequences of political behaviour in the organisation?
- 11) As a manager, how important is it to have political skill? Why?
- 12) In your opinion, what are the dimensions of political skill?
soft skill and being honest and truthful to yourself while using it is the crucial.
- 13) In your opinion, is there a link between leadership style, politics, and employees' performance? How?